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# ARANYA

**HYDERABAD BIRDING PALS | FRIENDS OF FLORA & FAUNA**

**Editors**
Gopalakrishna R
Phani Krishna Ravi
Sriram Reddy
Kalyan Ineni
RK Balaji
Fareed Mohmed
Ajinkya Supekar

**Proofing**
Husein Latif
Suren Akkaraju
Ashis Kumar Pradhan

**Content Team**
Bhaarat Vyas
Krishna Mohan
Mohit Joshi
Rajeev Khandelwal
Shashi Kotte
Hari Adepu

**Cover Image**
Thick Billed Green Pigeon
By Anand Kalinadhabhatla

**Back Cover Image**
Black and Orange Flycatcher
By Phani Krishna Ravi
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Hyderabad Birding Pals

For Feedback and Contributions, Contact us

hbparanya@gmail.com
hyderabadbirdingpals@gmail.com
www.hyderabadbirdingpals.com
@hydbirdingpals
HyderabadBirdingPals

# In this issue

Aranya celebrates its completion of one year. We are happy to announce the first issue of the second volume. This issue compiles the birding achievements for the last 6 months for HBP. Most of the Birdwalks rewarded birders with special sightings. To the utmost delight of members, very rare birds to this region like the Desert Wheatear, Thick billed green pigeon, Himalayan Griffon were seen in the state. Our bird explorers also had the moments to see the sociable lapwing, black breasted parrotbill etc. on outstate expeditions. HBP had a rich participation for the bird photography event. This issue presents you with a better understanding for the differents types of bird migratory patterns. Please feel free to contribute your experiences with us at the email address given at the bottom of this page.Your valuable feedback is important to us.

We hope to amplify your spark of interest in birds and bird watching. We wish that this issue gathers your interest to go through the pages as well as to inspire you to explore more. Fly high!!!

Happy Birding
Gopalakrishna R

Hyderabad Birding Pals (HBP) is a group of bird watching enthusiasts based out of Hyderabad, united by a common love for birds. We organize free bird walks around the city of Hyderabad that are open to participation by all like-minded individuals. We are an informal group, who are passionate about bird watching and photography, learning about bird behavior (in the field) and doing our bit towards conservation of nature and its habitat as well. Do check our Facebook group to stay up to date on our bird watching events.

ARANYA

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# Bird Walks

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**1st July, 2018**

**216th Bird Walk | Edulabad Lake**
**8th July, 2018**

217th Bird Walk | Anna Sagar
15th July, 2018

218th Bird Walk | Himayath Sagar
22nd July, 2018

219th Bird Walk | Anna Sagar
29th August, 2018

220th Bird Walk | Himayath Sagar
5th August, 2018

221rd Bird Walk | Ananthagiri Hills
12th August, 2018

222nd Bird Photography-EVENT |
19th August, 2018

**223rd Bird Walk | Ameenpur Lake**
**26th August, 2018**

**224th Bird Walk | Osman Sagar**
**1st September, 2018**

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225th Bird Walk | Manjeera Wildlife Sanctuary
9th September, 2018

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16th September, 2018

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**23rd September, 2018**

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**2nd October, 2018**

**230th Bird Walk | Nallagandla Lake**
**6th October, 2018**

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**7th October, 2018**

**232nd Bird Walk | Edulabad Lake**
**14th October, 2018**

233rd Bird Walk | Ameenpur Lake
13th October, 2018

234th Bird Walk | Poch""aram Wildlife Sanctuary
21st October, 2018

దేవాదాయ ధర్మాదాయ శాఖ
శ్రీ లక్ష్మీ అనంత పద్మనాభ స్వామి దేవస్థానం
అనంతగిరి, వికారాబాద్ జిల్లా

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**28th October, 2018**

**236th Bird Walk | Ameenpur Lake**
**4th November, 2018**

**237th Bird Walk | Narsapur Reserve Forest**
**11th November, 2018**

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239th Bird Walk | Manjeera Reservoir
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241th Bird Walk | Uma Maheshwaram
09th December, 2018

242th Bird Walk | Osman Sagar
16th December, 2018

## 243rd Bird Walk | Ananthagiri Hills
23rd December, 2018

## 244th Bird Walk | Manjeera Reservoir
30th December, 2018

మంజీర మొసళ్ళ అభయారణ్యం-సంగారెడ్డి
KALPAGO

# Bird Migration

*Gopalakrishna R*

## Wintering birds

One of the best times in terms of bird diversity in the Indian subcontinent is winter. That is when the migratory birds arrive spend a few months in the warmer part of the world where ample food and more habitable climes are present. Bird migration is a seasonal movement of birds between breeding and wintering grounds. Several species travel thousands of kilometers in order to find a suitable temporary habitat in order to escape from the bitter cold in the north (temperate climate) towards the tropics. Migration can be triggered by a combination of changes in day length, lower temperatures, changes in food supplies, and genetic predisposition. For centuries, people who have kept cage birds have noticed that the migratory species go through a period of restlessness each spring and fall, repeatedly fluttering toward one side of their cage.

Picture: Dishari De - Bar headed Goose

Picture: Vijay Kumar - Rosy Starling

Migration today is indeed a perilous journey and involves escaping a wide range of threats, both natural and often man-made. The longer a bird migrate, the longer is the risk. The diversity of human culture and behaviour from different countries with their different habits pose a great threat to these birds. As migratory birds depend on multiple sites along their route, the loss of wintering and stopover sites sharply decrease their chances of survival.

## Different Types of Bird Migration

Bird migratory pattern has been classified in the following levels. The migratory pattern still continues to evolve and still will continue. It is believed that birds migrate differently to enhance their odds for survival. It's also believed that the birds are looking for better resources which will aid them to reproduce better taking advantage of the variety of food sources in their route taken. These are the most common migratory patterns:

**1. Seasonal:** This well-known and widespread migration is predictable based on seasonal changes, as birds move between breeding and wintering ranges. The peak of these migration occurs during spring and fall mostly, though in some areas the wet and dry seasons areas well indicators of migration.

Picture: Fareed Mohammed - Red breasted flycatcher

**2. Latitudinal:** This migration is between areas of different latitudes from north to south at the beginning of winter and vice versa towards the beginning of summer. This is the most common migration type. The exact direction of migration is often determined by geographic features such as mountain ranges and available habitats.

Picture: Sarath Babu Dhulipalla - Ruddy Shelduck

Picture: Sriram Reddy - Black Headed Bunting

**3. Longitudinal:** Similar to latitudinal migration, this type of movement is a change between different longitudes from east to west or west to east. This is a common type of migration several European birds where geographic features encourage birds to move longitudinally rather than latitudinally.

Picture: Phani Krishna Raavi - Red Billed Leiothrix

**4. Altitudinal:** Birds that breed in tall mountains often exhibit altitudinal migration. This type of migration is the move to lower elevations in winter, when harsh weather and deep snowfall may make staying at upper elevations impossible. Birds that use altitudinal migration may not venture far in terms of overall distance, but just a few hundred feet of elevation can make a great difference in habitats. This type of migration is commonly seen in the Himalayan ranges.

**5. Loop:** Birds that follow an annual circle are loop migrants. This migration includes two distinctly different routes to and from breeding grounds, often taking advantage of varied resources at different times of the year. Loop migration is common with many seabirds and shorebirds as they use seasonal variations in wind patterns to aid their flight.

Picture: Soumyajit Basu - Osprey

**6. Nomadic:** This movement is less predictable and can be erratic depending on available food and water resources. Nomadic birds tend to stay within the same range but may be completely absent from parts of that range when resources are scarce but will return when the habitat becomes more suitable. This migratory explains the presence and absence of several bird species.

SRIRAM PHOTOGRAPHY

Picture: Sriram Reddy - European Roller

sundar photography

Picture: Sundareswaran Vetaikorumagan - Little Stint

**7. Irruptive:** Bird irruptions are highly unpredictable but spectacular migrations that bring large numbers of birds into unusual areas, most often in winter. Unlike nomads, irruptive birds may be found far outside their expected ranges during this type of migration, but the reason is the same – the search for suitable food and water resources. Types of migrating birds that exhibit irruptive patterns include thrushes, starlings and snowy owls.

Picture: Balakrishna Marar - Yellow Crowned Woodpecker

**8. Dispersal:** While not always considered a true migration, bird dispersal is nonetheless relatively predictable and seasonal, though only once a year. In this migration, juvenile birds are forced away from their hatching grounds and must seek out their territories as their parents continue to use the same range. This is more common among birds that are year-round residents of the same range and will defend their territories throughout the year, such as woodpeckers.

**9. Leap Frog:** A leap frog or skip migration is a unique pattern where a northern population will migrate a greater distance to skip over a sedentary population of the same species. A year-round range is thus occupied in between the breeding and wintering grounds of the leapfrogging population, but the individual populations do not extensively mix.

Picture: Rajeev Khandelwal - Green winged teal

**10. Reverse:** Reverse migration is an aberration among migratory birds. It is most often seen in autumn when young birds can become confused or disoriented and instead of migrating along the expected route go in the opposite direction. These lost birds end up as vagrants far from their traditional locations. This is not usually seen with large numbers of birds but is more likely with individuals and isolated sightings, some of which can be quite spectacular.

Naresh Vadrevu

Picture: Naresh Vadrevu- Malabar Whistling Thrush

**11. Molt:** Some birds migrate only to accommodate their annual molting periods. During a molt migration, birds will leave an established range to stay at a safe, secure range while they are vulnerable and less capable of flight, even during brief flightless periods. After the molt is complete, they will return to their regular range regardless of season or breeding readiness. This phenomenon is seen among a wide range of duck species but is not common with other types of birds.

Picture: Pradeep Nair - Indian Peafowl

**12. Drift:** Drift migration is a rare but highly anticipated event many birders hope to see. When it happens, large numbers of migrating birds have "drifted" away from their typical migration routes, often pushed by storms. This can result in spectacular fallout events and many rare bird sightings.

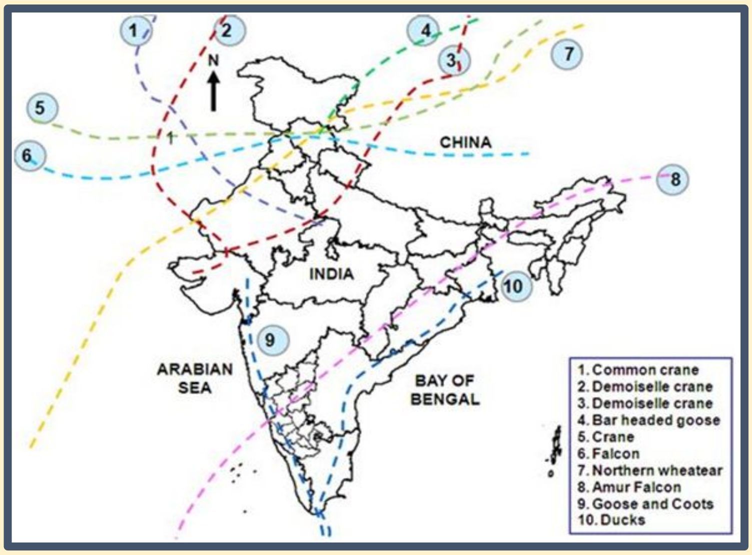
Picture: Ashwin Kadiyala - Ruddy turnstone

## Destination for migration

The migratory destination of several birds are thousands of kilometers away. Navigation is extremely complicated as it needs the knowledge of the current location, the final destination and the route/direction to be taken. The exact mechanism is still unknown, however the popular belief is that the birds migrate using the sun, magnetic fields and the popular contours like mountains and rivers to migrate. Research suggests that the upper beak of the birds contain magnetite which helps them to align along with magnetic lines to migrate.

Different birds take different paths of migration to their destinations. Some of the well known places where migratory birds arrive in India are the western coast and inland lakes like Chilika. The lakes like Osman Sagar, Manjeera reservoir and Ameenpur host a variety of migratory birds in Telangana.

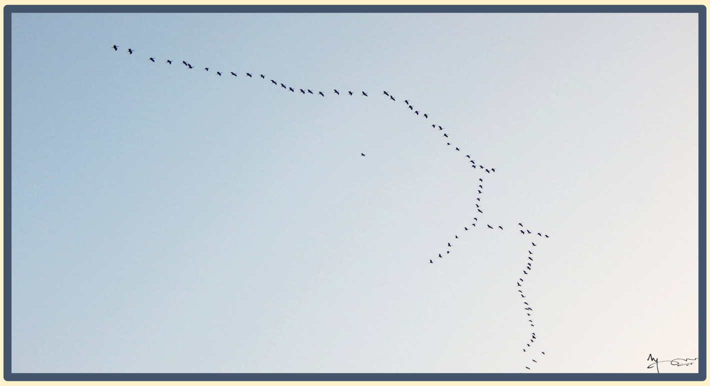
The following are the observed migratory routes in India.



http://wgbis.ces.iisc.ernet.in/energy/water/paper/TR123/section6.htm

## Flight Formation

Several observations suggest that birds fly in a ‘V’ formation. Large birds such as geese and ducks fly in this formation to reduce the effect of friction on their wings. This allows the birds to fly further and more efficiently than a bird flying alone by itself. It is found that there is 70% increase in efficiency when flying in ‘V’ formation. The lead bird and the last birds flying farthest back in the ‘V’ work the hardest, while the birds in between benefit from the flapping motion of the other birds. This alignment also improves their communication during flight.



Picture: Sundareshwaran Vetaikorumagan - Glossy Ibis

## Migratory birds that we see

The beginning of the migratory season in central and south India is marked by the arrival of the Greenish Leaf Warbler which generally occurs around late September to early October and lasting till they leave which generally occurs around late February to early March. In between we have a lot of ducks arriving.

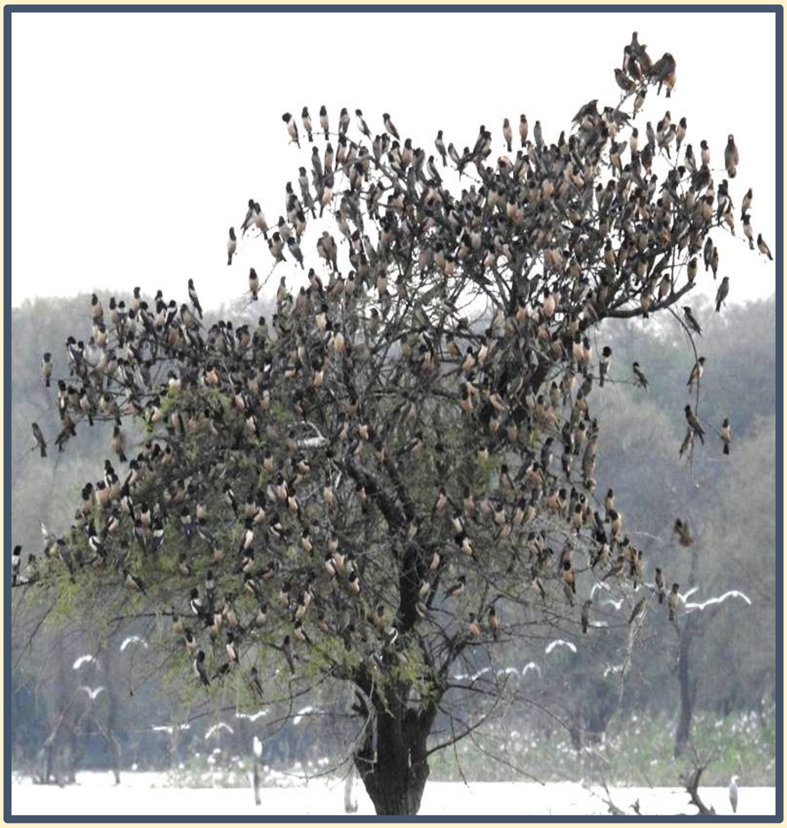
Picture: Naveen Satha - Greenish Warbler

The entire population of the rosy starlings migrate to the Indian subcontinent during this period. A list of flycatchers are seen only during this period. It is also believed that bird migration also reinforces a cleanup of the bird species where the genetically poor and the sick birds are eliminated from the colony as they are incapable of full migration.

©Sunny Inaganti

Picture: Sunny Inaganti - Verditer flycatcher

Birdwatching during this period is much more rewarding in terms of the number of bird species which can be seen. Certain places where the migratory and the resident birds choose, commonly known as hotspots concentrate the maximum number of the bird species for an entire region. In Hyderabad, places like Osman Sagar lake, Ameenpur lake, Himayath Sagar lake, Ananthagiri hills, Manjeera reservoir, Laknavaram lake, Pakhal lake, Nallamala forest, Rollapadu grasslands, Edulabad lake, Fox Sagar lake, ICRISAT campus, Narasapur reserve forest, Pocharam, Shamirpet lake etc. are the most sought places places by birds. A birding visit to these areas will be a great feast for the eyes. Winter has come along very well this time in Hyderabad and Hyderabad Birding Pals wishes a happy birding for this migratory season.



Picture: Sundareshwaran Vetaikorumagan - Rosy starlings

# Edulabad Trip Report

***Hari Krishna Adepu***

216th Bird Walk | Edulabad
8th July 2018

Edulabad Lake is located near Ghatkesar, Hyderabad. It is also known as Edulabad water reservoir. Industrial sewage and waste from Patancheru have polluted this lake, killing fish and causing illness in lakeside communities in 2002.

In spite of all the pollution caused by the industrial effluents, the lake hosts a decent variety of fish and avi-fauna. We conducted our birdwalk on 8th July 2018 to this lake, expecting to see the migrant birds, along with the residents, and, we were not disappointed. We reached the lake by 7AM on the day of the birdwalk, and were greeted by the slight drizzle in the area, which stopped in a few minutes, giving us an opportunity to go about our birding.

The bird walk began on a dull note, with not much of bird activity near the lake, except a few grey herons and other commoners. We started heading towards the fields nearby hoping to see some action. The fields gave us a warm welcome with a bunch of Black-Breasted Weavers hunting for their breakfast.

Shashi Kotte Photography

**Picture: Shashi Kotte - Pied Bushchat (*Saxicola caprata)***

The weavers gave us quite a few good pictures. After watching and clicking the Black-breasted Weavers and the munias, we ventured to the other areas in search of other species.

Our efforts proved fruitful, as what we saw on the other side of the fields really excited us. There were bunch of Greater Painted Snipes and Ruddy-breasted Crakes roaming around in the paddy fields.

**Picture: Hari Adepu - Black-breasted Weaver *(Ploceus benghalensis*)**

We immediately searched for a vantage point and hid ourselves from the Snipes, hoping to get a good sight of them and some good pictures., but, in vain. We went further ahead continuing our birding and were happy to spot quite a few species.

The day ended at 11AM with a count of nearly 100 species. Finally, it was quite an eventful day with good birding in pleasant weather.

On the top of a tree, we saw a beautiful painted stork, which was as colorful as a butterfly. We even saw 2 to 3 peacocks, which were dancing and this was the best moment of this bird walk for me. Later, we gathered and discussed about all the species we got and at last, we listed up to 107 species. I want to personally thank Phani sir for giving this opportunity, which was very educative and I learned about many new species. Hope I will attend many more such bird walks with this amazing team and get a good exposure to different avian species.

eBird checklist:

https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45346744

**Picture: Deepika Surya - Indian Gray Hornbill (*Ocyceros birostris*)**

**Picture: Deepika Surya - Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)**

**Picture: Deepika Surya - Gray-headed Swamphen (*Porphyrio poliocephalus*)**

**Picture: Sourav Kumar Das - Yellow Bittern**
**(*Ixobrychus sinensis*)**

# Birding In Munnar

***Manjula Desai***

A trip to Munnar was planned initially with my friend and Myself from Bengaluru to see the Neelakurinji blooming at the Eravikulam national park. It almost got cancelled due to the devastating flood that caused a lot of havoc in the state of Kerala. The airports were shut down, landslides happened, roads got washed away and there was a shortage of clean drinking water. Given these difficult circumstances, we were concerned about our safety and also the state of the blooms in the national park. We decided to take a chance and go anyway!

When I mentioned my travel plans to my birding friend Sriram Reddy, he showed interest in joining too! (although, his primary agenda was *birding* in the Munnar area!) He managed to find a local guide - Kuttetan, who turned out to be quite helpful. However, in the beginning, he wasn't sure of sighting any birds, due to the heavy rains. He said we could still take a chance and try.

Picture: Sriram Reddy - Square tailed bulbul

The first day, Sriram my friend and I drove to Eravikulam national park and to our surprise, the day was quite dry and enjoyable in the first half. The second half of the day was soaking wet!

Picture: Dinesh Singh- Vernal Hanging Parrot

We managed to get some bird sightings in the meantime! I spotted a couple of Nilgiri pipits in the bush. They were not shy at all! We managed to click a few pictures with our mobile phones, even!

The second day, I and my friend decided to drive to Top Station - a beautiful viewpoint, which is about 35 km away from Munnar. A small trek led us to a mesmerizing view of the rolling hills on Tamil Nadu, bordering the place. There, I could see two black eagles and a crested serpent eagle gliding very close to us! I took a couple of pictures with my 24-70mm lens! We saw a mother and baby elephant were walking about in a grassland near Mattupatty.

Picture: Manjula Desai - Indian Scimitar Babbler

Sriram on the other hand, went birding with Kuttettan and few other birders to Eravikulam national park, again! He mentioned that he returned to Kuttetan's place by lunchtime and spent the rest of the afternoon taking pictures in his beautiful backyard!

Picture: Manjula Desai- Flame-throated Bulbul

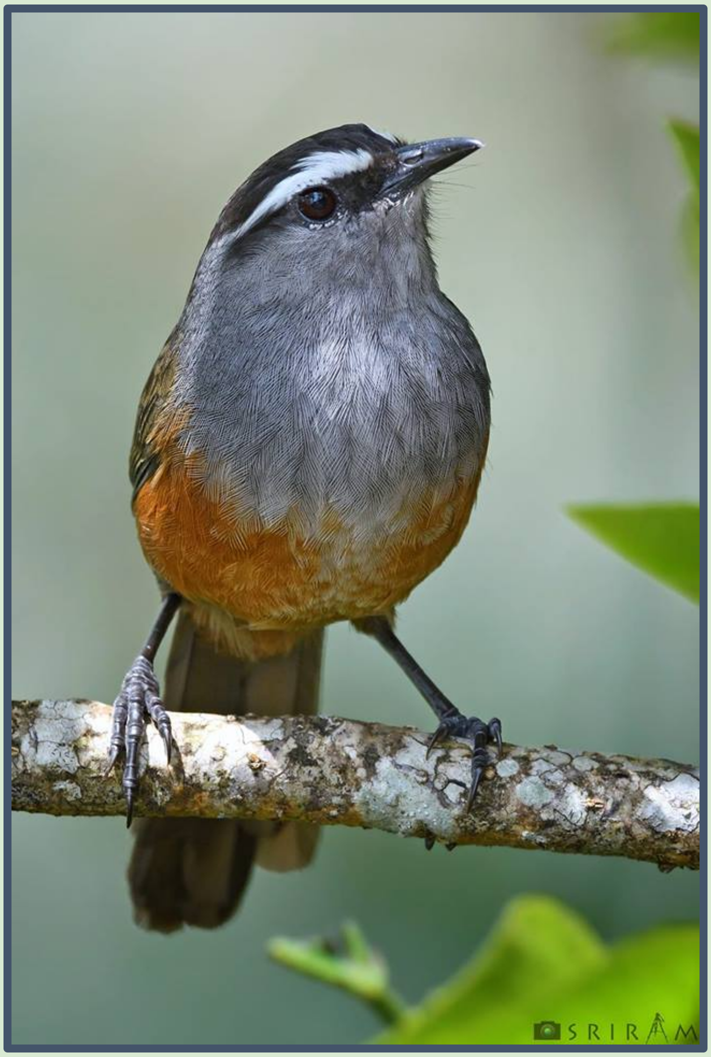
The third day, after my friend returned to Bengaluru, Sriram and I went to Kuttetan's place early in the morning. His home opens up to a beautiful forest patch with lots of bird activity! It is a very cosy place that he built for himself, primarily to watch birds in the convenience of his living room. That's every bird-watchers' dream!

We were able to sit down comfortably and photograph various birds, such as - Little spiderhunter, Flame-throated bulbuls, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Yellow-browed bulbuls, Crimson-backed sunbirds, White-cheeked barbets, Oriental white-eye etc.

Picture: Sriram Reddy - Little spiderhunter

Another pleasant surprise was the sighting of two Lion-tailed macaques in that forest patch! We were able to take plenty of photographs while they feasted on the huge native jackfruits.

After lunch, we left to spot a few other birds in the vicinity.



Picture: Sriram Reddy - Palani Laughing Thrush

Picture: Manjula Desai - Crimson backed sunbird

At first, we stopped near the side of a road, which is supposed to be a hotspot for birds. We spotted Indian scimitar babblers, small minivets, greater racket-tailed drongos. Later on, we drove to the edge of the tea estates, near a small lake, where we saw a couple of Indian scimitar babblers again, a Palani laughingthrush, grey jungle fowl, Greater Flameback, Malabar parakeets, etc. Then, we drove to the place which is lined with resorts.

Picture: Sriram Reddy - White Cheeked barbet

At the highest point, we were able to spot a couple of Nilgiri wood-pigeons, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike, Heart-spotted woodpeckers, Vernal hanging parrots etc. Soon, the weather turned extremely foggy and we were forced to drive down. We stopped at a highway tea stall/restaurant which is also a beautiful viewpoint. There, we saw a black eagle, Southern Hill Myna, Square-tailed bulbul etc. We called it a day, as the light dimmed down and we went back to Kuttetan's office. He shared his birding experiences and showed us his wonderful bird photographs taken over the years.

Picture: Manjula Desai- Little spiderhunter

https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S48923323

Overall, it was a very enjoyable trip with a few good lifers and beautiful scenic views! Another trip to cherish for a long time.

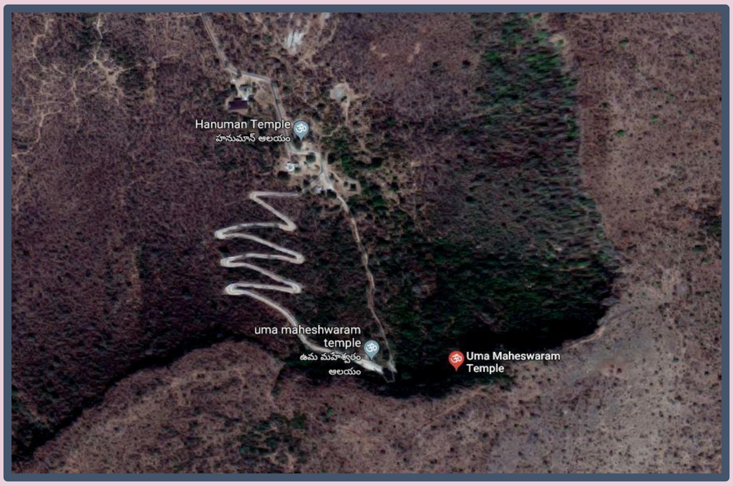
Picture: Manjula Desai - Indian Elephants

# Uma Maheshwaram Trip Report

***Sai Srinivas Vemuri***

**HBP-241 Bird walk**
**09-12-2018**

Umamaheswaram (16.7765° N, 81.5034° E) is located in Nallamala Forest range around 140 kilometers away from Hyderabad in Srisailam Highway. Umamaheshwaram is known as the northern gateway of Srisailam.



Picture: Google maps

The hotspot of Umamaheswaram hosts around 233 plus avian species and is a good spot for many Endemic bird species like Yellow Throated Bulbul and Emerald Dove.

Umamaheswaram bird walk is always a bird walk worth to wait for most of the people to join because of the Flora and Fauna we see there.

Picture: Sriram Reddy - Emerald Dove

The day trip started with a cup of tea at the regular meeting near ORR junction at early morning 4.30 am. The climate was cold and pleasant. We were around 40 people gathered at the meeting point and started towards Umamaheswaram in Srisailam Highway. It took around one and half hours to reach the destination on an average speed of 70 km per hour. We reached the temple at 6 o'clock in the morning.

We prepared the gear and started looking for birds. The first sighting was yellow footed green pigeon. As there was a flock of bird on the tree we counted at least a dozen at a time on that tree near the entrance of the temple in Umamaheswaram.

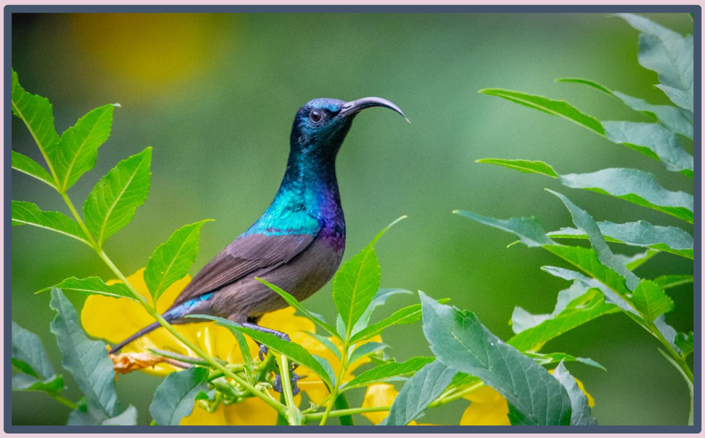
Picture: R K Balaji - Yellow footed green pigeon

We noticed a flock of Coppersmith Barbets and a Brown Headed barbet flying and landed on a tree near the parking area. That is the first experience I saw, flock of these birds. Since we had large number of participants, we divided into small groups and started birding.

We waited for the proper light to take the photos. But we got the record shots at that time and Mr Kalyan explained the habitat of birds and showing the path for us. As we saw lot of activity in early morning we were enjoying it a lot. By the time 7:30 am we got a proper light to take the pictures. Slowly we started spotting the birds and clicking pictures. We saw the first sight of Blue rock thrush, Golden fronted leafbird, Yellow throated bulbul, White browed bulbul. After a small movement we went to down steps where there are steps located exactly opposite to the temple. We spotted lots of birds like babblers and also Indian black birds and Emerald dove adjacent to steps. The birds were in clutter in search of food under the tree. We felt very sorry to see the birds searching food in litter and in plastic wastage.

Picture: Bharath Vyas - Golden fronted leafbird

We went further at the end of the walk area and saw the Tickell's blue flycatcher. There was some construction going on for water storage. One of the group members Mr Sathish Sasi noticed Banded Bay cuckoo and able to click a record shot. We spent some time there and while coming back we spotted



Picture: Praharsha Majeti - Loten's sunbird

Long-billed sunbird, Blue Capped Rock thrush and Common hawk-cuckoo. Also we got the record shot of Grey Junglefowl pair which was very hard to find and click in this area. After sometime at 9:30 am we sighted Golden fronted leaf-bird. We sighted Blue rock thrush where it was sitting on the tree perch. We spent some time clicking the photographs of that bird.

At 10 o'clock we took a group picture and we took a break for some time. After sometime we spotted a very rare bird for this area which was Malabar whistling thrush.

Picture: Husein Latif - Malabar whistling thrush

This is probably 3rd location where we have seen this bird in Telangana. As soon as we saw the bird in clutter, immediately we pointed our telephoto zoom lens on the bird and went into a burst of shutter clicks. Oh boy! We took using Nikon gear D7200 with and started clicking the bird as we can get some record shorts. And at the same time we also saw the Orange headed thrush and again we took our zoom lens to click the pictures.

And we waited for some time to click the birds. And it was almost 11 o'clock as the weather was hot. Me, Kalyan, Chaitanya, Hemanth and Master Chetan went down to explore the area near water pond at the entrance of the ghat road. We noticed some night jars there and we were able to click Jerdon's nightjar. Everybody left the place after a wonderful birding session at 11:30 am in the morning.

Had a Happy Birding session.

Shashi Kotte Photography

Picture: Shashi Kotte - Black-naped monarch flycatcher

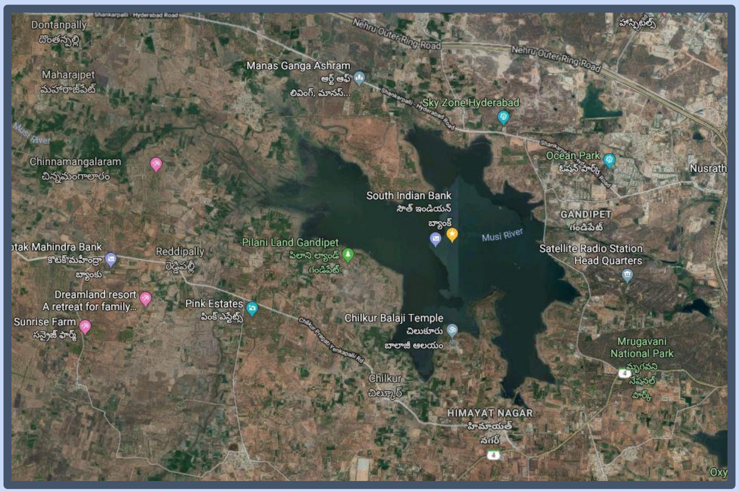
Picture: Ashwin Kadiyala - Yellow throated bulbul

# Osman Sagar Trip Report

***Harikrishna Adepu***

## 242nd Birdwalk at Osman Sagar Lake

Osman Sagar, popularly known as Gandipet, is a reservoir in the city of Hyderabad. It is a popular tourist destination, especially in monsoon season when the reservoir is full. Apart from being a tourist destination, Osman Sagar also hosts a variety of avi-fauna, which offers a visual treat to the bird watchers.


Dontanpally
Maharajpet
Manas Ganga Ashram
Nehru Outer Ring Road
Sky Zone Hyderabad
Chinnamangalaram
Ocean Park
Nusrath
South Indian Bank
GANDIPET
Musi River
Satellite Radio Station Head Quarters
Pilani Land Gandipet
Reddipally
Dreamland resort A retreat for family
Pink Estates
Sunrise Farm
Chilkur Balaji Temple
Mrugavani National Park
Chilkur
HIMAYAT NAGAR
Oxy

Picture: Google maps

It was on 16 Dec, we had our 242nd Birdwalk at Osman Sagar. We all met at the tea stall near APPA Junction, which is our regular meeting spot. It 6AM, the sun just started rising. We headed towards our destination. We reached the spot by 6:30, took out our binocs and cameras and started looking out for birds.

We were walking towards the lake, and suddenly, something caught our eye. Looking from a distance, it was a raptor for sure, and we slowly started moving towards it, as it was still little dark to get a picture of it, even a record shot. Once we got a little closer, there it was, the Common Kestrel perched on a branch. Slowly the bird activity started increasing, and right after we saw the Kestrel, next was the Sykes's Larks hooping around grabbing their breakfast. After clicking few good shots of the Larks, we headed further looking for other species.

Picture: Karthik Enumulla - Common Kestrel

As we walked ahead, we were greeted by a Bay-backed Shrike, followed by a Montagu's Harrier and other commoners. We further ventured inside, and, spotted quite a few species, including a flock of Black-Headed Gulls, Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Wigeons, Northern Shovelers, Gadwalls, Shikra. It was 10AM and the light was getting harsh, so, we decided to call it a day.

Overall it was a great day with a count of 110 species.

# Ananthagiri Hills Trip Report

### *G Surya Deepika*

On 23rd Dec 2018 HBP conducted bird walk in ananthagiri hills. So I got my birding batch from our college who are as interested as am I. We started from my place at 5am and reached there by 6:30 am then all gathered to take a group picture.

Later my friends joined us at 7am and first bird came into my eyes was rufous treepie on a cloudy perch. Phani sir later turned our eyes onto a rare bird Tickell’s thrush which was camouflaged in the dry leaves and no one was unable to find it and he was urging to take a record shot and finally found it out and took a record shot, while taking that we got encountered with orange headed thrush at a very close distance and which lost our vision on it due to the arrival of blue capped rock thrush. Later we moved on and we came across blue faced malkoha, orange headed thrush, and black bird.

Picture: Shashi Kotte - Chestnut headed bee eater

Dr. Balakrishna Marar's Photography

Picture: Balakrishna Marar - Brown Fish Owl

We got our eyes on a tree which was filled with rose ringed parakeets and one of my friend identified lesser goldenback woodpecker which got our attention for almost 10 mins. A Grasslands area welcomed us as we moved ahead and got with Asian brown flycatcher, olive backed pipit, sulphur bellied warbler, few starlings and munias.

Fareed Mohmed

Picture: Fareed Mohammed - Blue capped rock thrush

We started back and red breasted flycatcher came in front of our way for a second and flew away. Later a big tree buttresses was beautified with paradise flycatcher with its long enchanting tail.

Naveen Sama Photography

Picture: Naveen Sama - White spotted fantail

All are tired and started having some food which was interrupted by a couple of black bird having their meals, which is continued with tickell's blue flycatcher, cinereous tit, white spotted fantail, tailor bird.

Picture: Bhaarat Vyas - Olive backed Pipit

We discussed regarding some differences of how to identify some specific birds. To observe the behavior of Tickell's thrush we sat near a shade place which has water resource, where red vented bulbuls, cinereous tit, sulphur bellied warbler, oriental white eyes and hume's leaf warbler. On a slope a pair of tickell's thrush got their attention and took some record shots where male and female were in a single frame. This got ended with a long conversation of behavior and habitat of thrushes.

Naveen Sama Photography

Picture: Naveen Sama - Paradise flycatcher

My special thanks to Phani for guiding us and making me and my friends know more about habitats of birds.

Picture: G Surya Deepika - Tickell’s Thrush

Picture: Praveen Rao Koli - Tickell’s Thrush

# Pakhal Bird Festival

### *Shashi Kotte*

The 240th bird walk of team HBP was held at Pakhal Lake, Warangal. The bird walk was also the 1st Bird Festival organized by the DFO Mr. Purushotam, (Warangal Rural) an avid wildlife enthusiast. Pakhal Lake is located 50 kilometers away from Warangal, near taluk headquarters Narsampet. The lake is about 30 Sq. Kilometers and the Wildlife Sanctuary surrounding it is about 839 km in area.

Picture: Sriram Reddy - Chestnut headed bee eater

Turns out, the sanctuary adjoining the Lake and the nearby areas are virtual goldmines for Birders. The park adjoining the lake was home to numerous species of birds. The team members formed small groups and started exploring various parts of the wildlife sanctuary. Every group returned by the end of the day and had tales to share during the gathering before dinner.

Picture: Sriram Reddy - Crested Bunting

This bird walk was different from the other bird walks, normally the birdwalks are held on Sundays but the 240th edition was spread across two days (1st & 2nd December 2018). The meticulous planning that went into organizing the event made is a pleasant experience to all the participants. This would not have been possible without the involvement of the staff from The Forest Department.

Picture: Munna Mandalapu - Dusky Eagle Owl

Picture: Gopalakrishna R - Thick billed green pigeon

**Rare Sightings:**

Many rare birds were sighted during the birdwalk Thick-billed Green Pigeon, common rose Finch, Dusky Eagle Owl, and Grey-headed Fish-eagle.

Picture: Munna Mandalapu - Grey headed fish eagle

A special mention of the Thick-billed Green Pigeon(female) must be made as its never been sighted in South India before. It is a resident of North-east India and is usually found at an altitude of 2000 ft. and above. It was found at 720 ft, perched on a *Lannea coromandalica* tree.

It was later on that the DFO told us that the tree bears sour fruits during winter and most fruit-eating birds perch on it for a bite.

The bird walk was a great success with over 130 species recorded. The team returned back with great memories and great clicks. A special thanks to the members of the Forest Department, as their help and guidance was invaluable.

https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S50389567

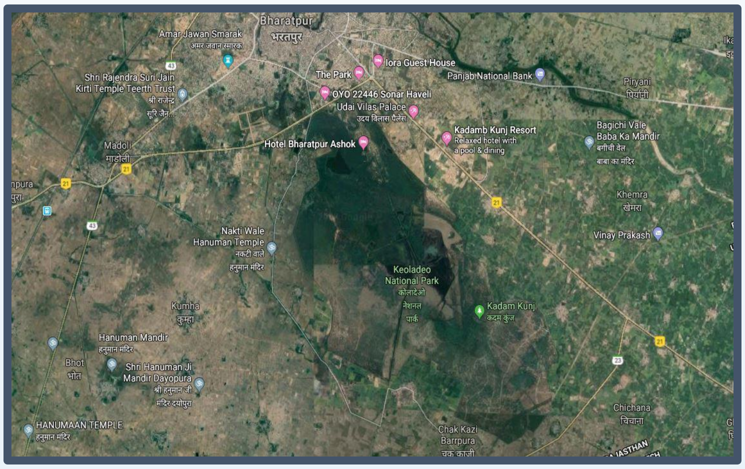
Picture: Sai Srinivas Vemuri- Thick billed green pigeon

Picture: Munna Mandalapu - Thick billed green pigeon

# Birding at Keoladeo National Park

***Sita Susarla***

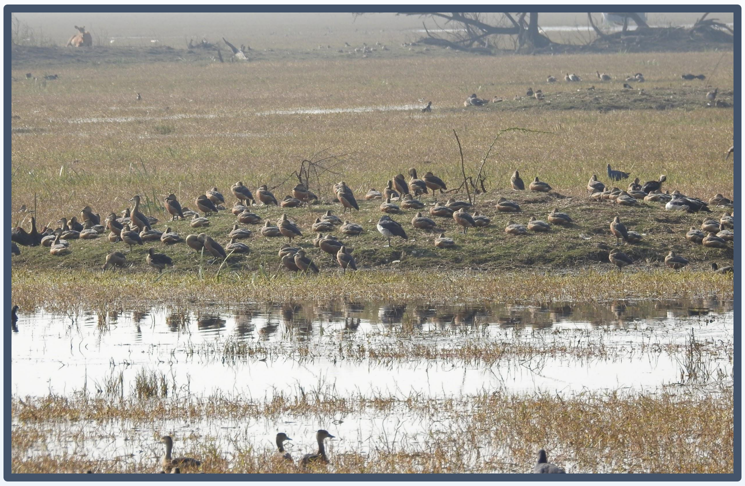
The Keoladeo National Park, earlier known as Bharatpur bird sanctuary, is situated in Bharatpur Rajasthan. It is 250 year old park and a world heritage site.


Bharatpur
भरतपुर
Amar Jawan Smarak
अमर जवान स्मारक
Shri Rajendra Suri Jain Kirti Temple Teerth Trust
श्री राजेन्द्र सूरि जैन...
Iora Guest House
The Park
Panjab National Bank
OYO 22446 Sonar Haveli
Udai Vilas Palace
उदय विलास पैलेस
Piryani
पिर्यानी
Hotel Bharatpur Ashok
Kadamb Kunj Resort
Relaxed hotel with a pool & dining
Bagichi Vale Baba Ka Mandir
बगीची वेल बाबा का मंदिर
Madoli
माडोली
Khemra
खेमरा
Vinay Prakash
Nakti Wale Hanuman Temple
नकटी वाले हनुमान मंदिर
Keoladeo National Park
कोलादेओ नेशनल पार्क
Kadam Kunj
कदम कुंज
Kumha
कुम्हा
Hanuman Mandir
हनुमान मंदिर
Bhot
भोत
Shri Hanuman Ji Mandir Dayopura
श्री हनुमान जी मंदिर दयोपुरा
HANUMAAN TEMPLE
हनुमान मंदिर
Chichana
चिचाना
Chak Kazi Barrpura
चक काजी

Picture: Google Maps

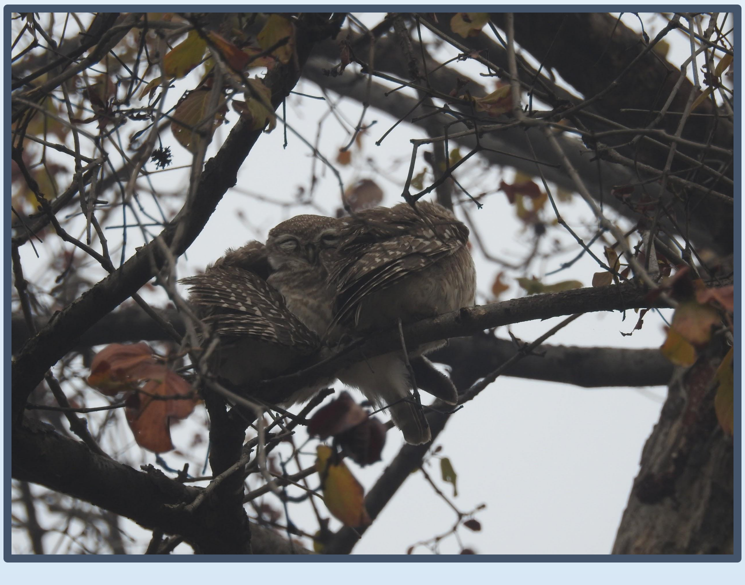
The park was declared as Ramsar site in 1981. It is a man-made wetland and has four different habitats in all. The dry grasslands, woodlands, woodland swamps and wetlands. Located in the Gangetic Plain it is a breeding site for herons, storks and cormorants, and an important wintering ground for large numbers of waterfowls.

Picture: Sita Susarla



Picture: Sita Susarla - Lesser whistling teals

We visited the park in January. It being a foggy day we had to wait until 10:30am to start birding. We decided to walk through the park, about five and a half kilometres, and avoided taking cycle rickshaws that were available to the tourists. This allowed us to cover more ground across the length and breadth of the park.



Picture: Sita Susarla - Spotted owlets

One of the first birds we saw were a flock of yellow footed green pigeons sunning on top of a tree. Huddled up high on a nearby tree were three spotted owlets. There were also Egyptian vultures perched on distant trees. As we looked on

Picture: Sriram Reddy - Common Babbler

As we looked on one of the vultures flew over us. The bird is easily recognizable in flight because of its wedge shaped tail and distinct under-wing pattern.

As we walked we saw the white eared bulbuls, black redstarts, red breasted flycatchers, common babbler, yellow eyed babbler and large grey babblers and Indian and magpie robins and a host of ground birds foraging closer to the ground. The park was abounding with activity. In one thicket we saw the blue throat. It was in faint breeding colors but the blue throat was distinctly visible. We could not sight the Siberian red throat despite considerable effort.

Picture: Sita Susarla - Greylag goose

At a tea stall inside the park we sipped some hot tea in the company of Rufous treepies and Bank Mynas. The park was so active with bird calls that every minute there would be a bird to observe. It is a paradise for a birder. As we continued walking we saw a gray headed canary flycatcher under the canopy of broad leaves. It was a lifer for us. It was a beautiful bird and was very actively feeding on insects. We were lucky to have watched it for a long time and that too at close range.

© Kuldeep Deshpande 2017

Picture: Kuldeep Vilas Deshpande - Gadwall and common moorhen

What we saw next was not a bird but a Bengal monitor lizard (Varanus bengalensis). As we clicked pictures of it a crowd collected around us to look at the lizard. We moved out of the crowd to be on a path that was like an avenue with stretches of wetland on either side.

Picture: Gopalakrishna R - Knob Billed Duck

Picture: Sita Susarla - Darter

The first wetland birds to see were three black necked storks, one woolly necked stork, common ducks, Knob-billed ducks, Gadwalls and three bar headed geese. The resident painted storks were however not seen in significant numbers.

By now we had walked about 3km and decided to take a break for lunch. At 2:30 pm we were once again on our feet completely refreshed and ready to continue birding. We saw a large number of black kites flying up in the sky. Among them were a Bonelli's eagle, a Booted eagle and three Egyptian vultures. Just then flocks of lesser whistling ducks flew by us and settled down on the scattered mounds in the wetland. There were so many of them that we could easily count a hundred on the visible side of the mounds.

Picture: Sita Susarla - Crested serpent eagle

A furlong ahead we could see a watch tower and decided to spend some time up there before the light faded further. At the base of the tower a guide showed us a pair of Scops owls seated deep inside a tree. Hued in brownish colours they were completely camouflaged against the bark. From the top of the tower we saw large numbers of Greylag Geese. They were everywhere as far as the eye could reach. Here and there some Pintails and Shovelers were also seen. The view from the tower was spectacular with vast stretches of green wetlands below and sunset colours in the sky above. Nature in its full glory.

Picture: Sita Susarla - Greater spotted eagle

As we walked back a Eurasian Marsh harrier made frequent gliding forays in search of prey while the Greater spotted eagle, Tawny eagle and Crested serpent eagle were seen perched on trees as if winding up for the day. Now the light began to fade quickly and we had to hire the cycle rickshaws to return. All in all it was a very satisfying trip.

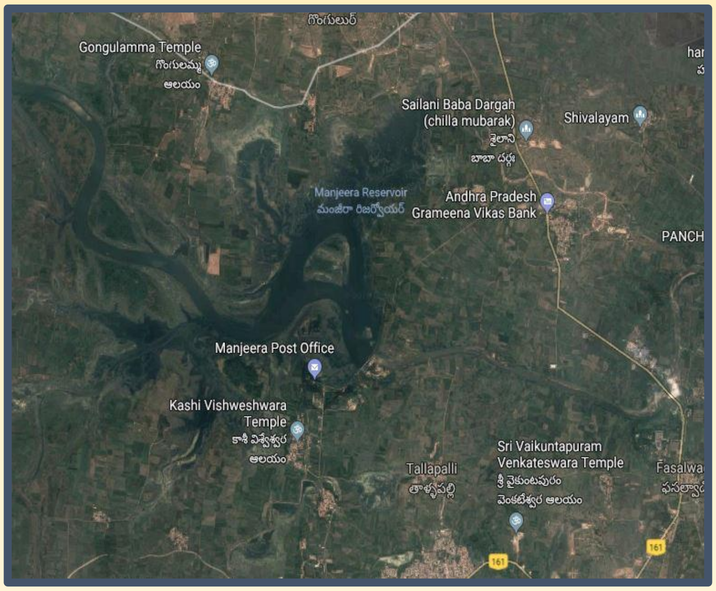
Picture: Sita Susarla - Tawny Eagle

# Manjeera Trip Report

***Sai Srinivas Vemuri***

**HBP-244 Bird walk**
**30-12-2018**

Manjeera wildlife sanctuary and reservoir is located in Sangareddy district of Telangana State, India. Originally a crocodile sanctuary, today more than 200 species of birds are spotted here and is home for the vulnerable mugger crocodile.


Gongulamma Temple
గొంగులమ్మ ఆలయం
Sailani Baba Dargah (chilla mubarak)
శైలాని బాబా దర్గా
Shivalayam
Manjeera Reservoir
మంజీరా రిజర్వాయర్
Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank
PANCH
Manjeera Post Office
Kashi Vishweshwara Temple
కాశీ విశ్వేశ్వర ఆలయం
Tallapalli
తాళ్ళపల్లి
Sri Vaikuntapuram Venkateswara Temple
శ్రీ వైకుంఠపురం వెంకటేశ్వర ఆలయం
Fasalwa
161

Picture: Google Maps

Picture: Kalyan Ineni: Bluethroat

On the day, we all congregated at Allwyn Colony, Miyapur, where we had a cup of tea at idly-dosa centre. We started around 5 o'clock and with an average speed of 70km per hour, it took us almost 90 minutes to reach café Nandini, where we had our breakfast. This is our regular place to have breakfast whenever we go to Manjeera. The weather was pleasant. We resumed our journey after our breakfast and reached Manjeera entrance at 6:45. We were approx. 35 people gathered around at the meeting point. After reaching we took a group picture near the entrance.

From there we divided into groups for birding. We started walking towards the left side lake bund from where we can find the birds along the bund patch. We saw spotted owlet sitting and we took some time to capture the pictures of it.
And we started walking towards bund and we spotted Long tailed Shrike. Today our target was to capture the buntings. So we started walking towards the farms and some known places to find the buntings.

We got to see lots of Baya Weavers flying from one place other place. There were almost of 500+ baya weavers. After some time, we chanced upon a crested bunting female sitting on top of a tree. This was spotted by Deepika and Kalyan. So we followed them to the tree and started capturing the record shots of the bird.

Picture: Srinivas Kolla - Crested bunting

We took record shots of that bird and after clicking some shots we came back to give some time and space to the bird so that it can give proper shot with a good background. In the meantime some of the people went to the fields in search of other birds. Kalyan and me was waiting for that bird and we went back and we got one more lucky chance, the crested bunting was sitting on the perch and it was giving proper pose for the photo. We called all the photographers to capture it and we were still waiting for it. Me and Kalyan went back and we got Red headed bunting very closely. So

© Chetan Photography

Picture: Kalyan Ineni - Black headed bunting

Kalyan advised me on the proper orientation to take a snap of it. And after some time we went back to the nearby temple with M Srinivas and he spotted Eurasian Wryneck which we are waiting for so many days to click it. We waited a long time to click it but we did not get the picture. But luckily M Srinivas got the proper picture. After sometime we went back to the temple with other people and we got Blue faced malkoha but it almost in the middle tree and we are waiting for it to come out so that we can click a good pictures. Finally after waiting for 15-20 min we got to capture it with nice backgrounds.

Even when it was almost 10 o'clock in the morning it had already become very sunny. We thought to go back to the meeting point. While returning to the meeting point we captured the pictures of common kingfisher. We spent some time near the lake and then we returned to the meeting point.

We wanted to check the Reservoir area and went ahead to that place. We saw Shikra there with mantis kill. Then and we started back to Hyderabad at 10:30am and we reached home by 12:00 PM. Had a happy birding.

# What's in my Camera Bag?

-Kalyan Ineni

Hello Birding Pals, I am Kalyan Ineni, a software engineer by profession and a bird photographer by passion. I started my photography during my college days when I was in my 20’s, with a Konica film camera to capture photos.

The first digital camera I used was a Sony W610 gifted by my cousin in 2007. I wished strongly to buy an entry level DSLR before my son was born in 2008. I purchased a Canon 600D in 2008 to capture my family photos.

When I came to know about my friend Anil S Kumar, who is already owned a canon 6D full frame camera with him, my total perception was changed. He used to do bird photography near his home in Pragathi Nagar, Hyderabad. After seeing his images I slowly attracted to bird photography. We Both regularly used to goto Ameenpur from 2012 to 2014 which is heaven for bird photographers. After a couple of months, both we came to know about Hyderabad Birding Pals and joined into the group.

## Gear Acquisition since early days…..

I always love to capture the birds since i purchased my entry level camera. Birds can be one of the most exciting and peculiar wildlife subjects to photograph, but, it’s harder than we thought. Birds are easily startled and are quick to fly away when they sense danger. They also have fast and unpredictable movements, which can change your composition in a split second. However, when the right steps are taken, the results can be simply stunning. After some time I started using the telephoto lense tamron 150-600 V1 which is the first of its kind in 2014. I loved this lense for its reach and the quality of the images I got with the combination of Canon 7D Mark II.

Picture: Kalyan Ineni - Little Stint

Picture: Kalyan Ineni - Eurasian Spoonbill

When Sigma 150-600 mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary Lens released and noticed that is quicker to catch focus when compared to the Tamron 150-600 V1. I upgraded my lens to a Sigma since I saw an advantage in focussing and quality images at 600 MM when we compared with the Tamron 150-600 V1.

Now a days, most of the time my son Chetan Sai (10yrs) using the gear during the birdwalks and keeps complaining to me about the focusing issues with third party lenses. Finally in November 2018, I decided to get the advantage of a native lense combination. If we want to get the advantage of native lense combination, which is expensive in Canon. I opted for a Nikkor 200-500 and purchased AF-S NIKKOR 200-500MM F/5.6E ED VR lense and D500 body.

# What's in my camera bag now…..

Nikon D500

## Nikon D500

I now upgraded my gear to Nikon D500. The D500 shoots faster with 10 frames per second continuous shooting Click.. Click.. click... which is a feast for bird photographers. Shooting a bird in motion is great with D500 due to higher number of focus points, with which, focus tracking is better and so bird in motion stays in focus. It also has a better autofocus system that locks on faster and tracks better than other bodies.

## Nikon 18-55 VR2

This is very useful for any family occasions, birthday parties at home. Usually we call this as a kit lense but this is inexpensive and good lense to start with. The Nikon 18-55mm may not be suitable for birding but it has its own benefits to keep along with the birding kit. This can be used to capture landscapes with backup body and also can be used to shoot videos.

# AF-S NIKKOR 200-500MM F/5.6E ED VR

This is the ideal telephoto lens for the amateur beginner or intermediate level bird photographer. When comparing with Sigma 150-600 Contemporary DG this lense is value for money and quality. Optical stabilization is fast, effective, completely silent and autofocus speed is good.

**Nikon 200-500mm**

The Nikon 200-500mm f/5.6E ED VR is full frame (FX format) lens. Nikon's full frame lenses can be mounted on Nikon professional bodies (FX), or even cropped sensor (DX) bodies. When the lens is mounted on a DX crop Nikon camera the focal length gets boosted to 300-750mm (35mm equivalent).

The tripod collar provides a well-balanced and secure support when shooting from a monopod or tripod. The “handle” portion of the tripod collar is good to use as a secure carry handle. This is far better than Sigma 150-600 Contemporary lense.

From the lenses that I’ve used the Tamron (150-600mm) and Sigma (150-600mm) lenses, I’d say that the Nikkor(200-500mm) is clearly sharper than the other two. Overall, I was pleasantly surprised by the performance of the 200-500mm. I’d say that the optical performance is well above what you’d expect for the money and when compared with Tamron and Sigma telephoto lenses.

Picture: Kalyan Ineni - Asian Pied Starling

## Nest NT-M123A Monopod

NEST NT-M123A monopod weighs in at just 290g and has a closed length of 350mm. Large metallic top plate with anti-slip rubber inlay and with integrated reversible tripod mount. Either 1/4" or 3/8" screw thread. This monopod is the best one to avoid vibration while taking the photos.

# Olympus 8x40 DPSI Binocular (Black)

It is really a nice binocular to watch birds in field. The magnification is good and the image is so much clearer and brighter. The image quality and usability makes it excellent value for money. The body and grip is all rubberized and feels good to grip and hold. The binoculars felt study with a good grip and the weight was just perfect. Quite easy to use and the eye cup rubbers were soft enough.

OLYMPUS
8x40 DPS I

**Olympus 8X40**

# Some suggestions for beginners:

© Kalyan Chetan Photography

Picture: Kalyan Ineni - Common Iora

- Advice for beginners: If you start with photography, I recommend that you shoot in RAW format and start with editing in Adobe Photoshop/Lightroom. Now a days all entry level DSLRs support RAW format.

- Even though I don't use any prime lenses, I suggest going for a native lens combination like Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 400mm f5.6. In Nikon, D500 with NiKKOR 200-500 Telephoto lense is great combination for bird photography.

- While birds are beautiful creatures to photograph, it is important that you do not harm them in the process of achieving that perfect shot. Be a responsible and ethical bird photographer by always respecting the birds and their natural habitat.

# Ending comments ...

If you have a limited budget, buy a cheaper body and invest in one good quality lens. If you want to get a good photograph reach the object as much as you can without disturbing the bird. Frame the picture while you are taking the photograph itself rather than cropping after clicking the image.

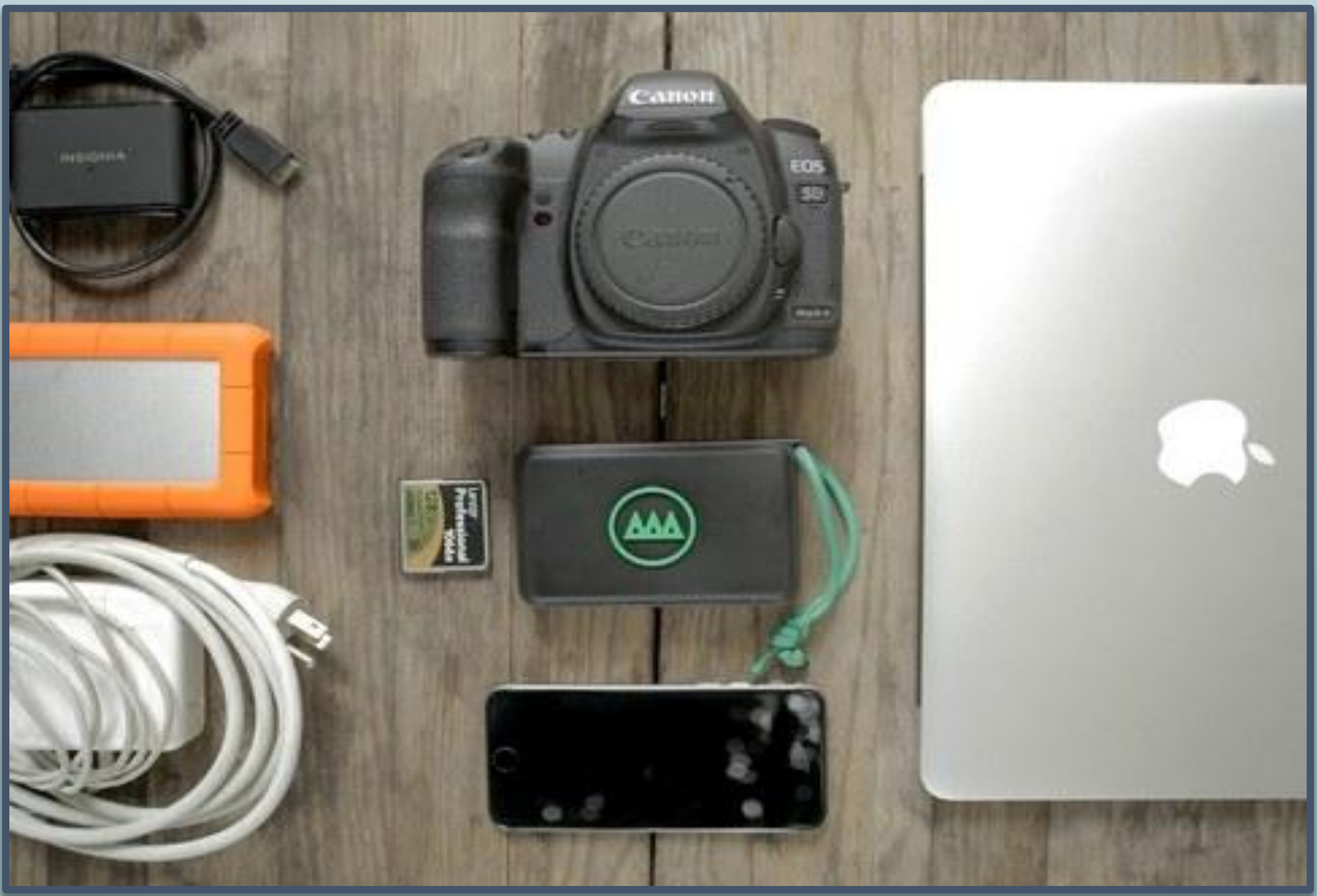
Picture: Kalyan Ineni - Whiskered Tern

# Gnarbox

*-Phani Krishna Ravi*

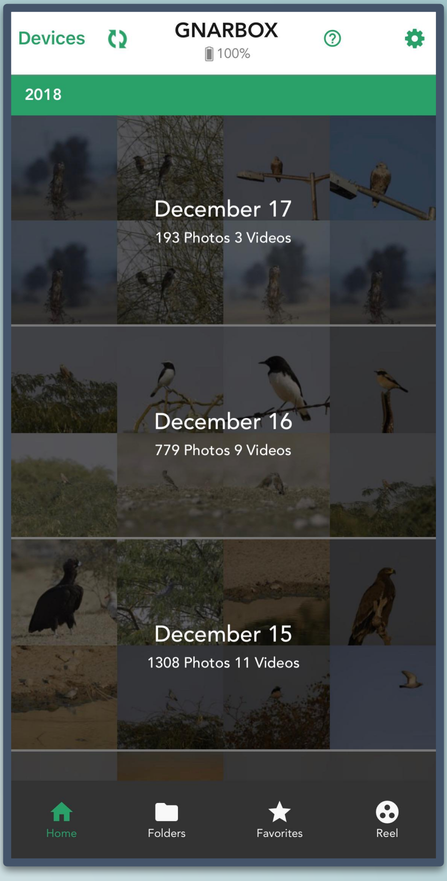
As a Wildlife Photographer, you always come across backing up your camera memory cards on the go in the most extreme climatic conditions, where the laptop is not the solution in a majority of the situations when a backup is required on the fly.

Gnarbox is a perfect alternative and a unique solution to replace the laptop as it is completely weather sealed with inbuilt battery and works in companion with your Smartphone. I have been using the 1st version of Gnarbox for a year and been to places with extreme temperatures and terrain. It has an inbuilt SD card slot, 256GB internal solid-state storage, both USB3.0 and USB2.0 ports which will allow me to hook my external CF card reader for CF cards from my Canon 5D mark IV. Since the device is almost the size of 2 external portable HDDs I always carry with me and a full battery charge can backup more than three 64GB CF cards to internal 256GB memory, on top of it for a long multi-day trips I carry another external 1TB HDD so I can back up from the Gnarbox 256GB or simultaneously backup data in Gnarbox and the external HDD.

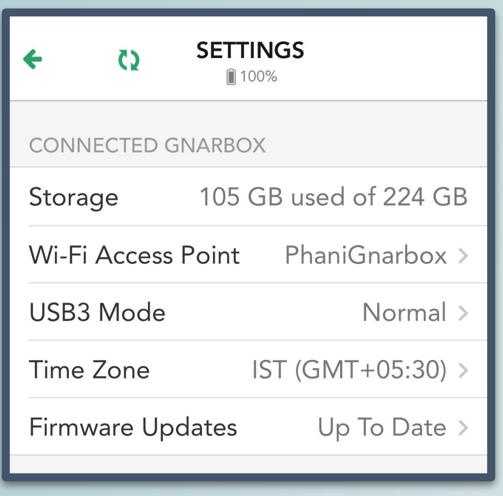


Size Comparison of Gnarbox with other devices

The iOS app from Gnarbox is very user friendly, after switching on the device it connects to your phone over wifi and open the app which will display all the mounted devices and the files in them, you can select the files which need to be backed up since the internal storage is SSD the transfer rates are faster compared to laptop backup solution. The app has the basic facility to import, edit and export the RAW files and videos, the majority of the formats are supported as on date. You can also use your existing Powerbank of your phone to charge the Gnarbox. After coming back from the trip you can plug into your desktop like an external storage device by changing the mode to "Mass Storage" in the phone app.

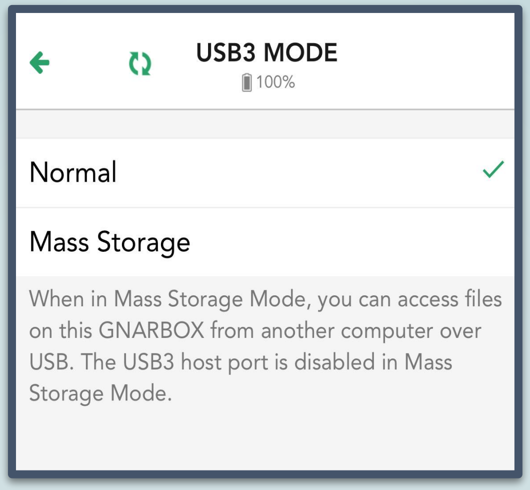


Above Image with content from my recent trip to Bikaner with total RAW CR2 files of 105GB



CONNECTED GNARBOX

| | |
|---|---|
| Storage | 105 GB used of 224 GB |
| Wi-Fi Access Point | PhaniGnarbox |
| USB3 Mode | Normal |
| Time Zone | IST (GMT+05:30) |
| Firmware Updates | Up To Date |



Normal ✓

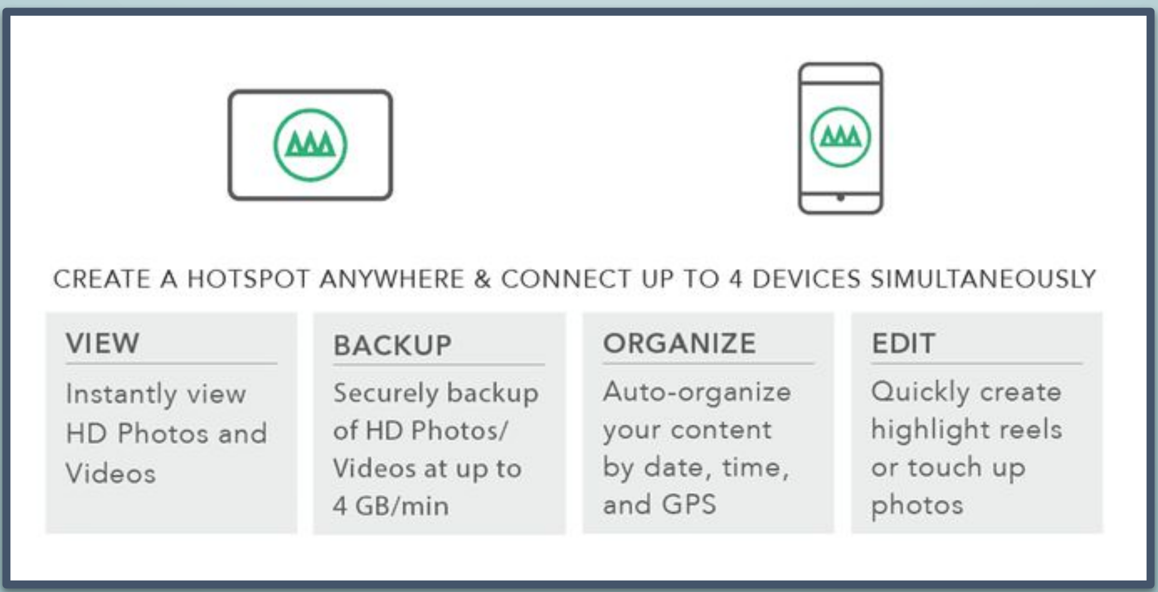
Mass Storage

When in Mass Storage Mode, you can access files on this GNARBOX from another computer over USB. The USB3 host port is disabled in Mass Storage Mode.

To conclude it is a very handy gadget for all the wildlife photographers and it comes at the fraction of cost, which is weatherproof like any Pro DSLR, it will replace your laptop and External HDDs and takes less space and weight. The 256GB Gnarbox costed me under 399 US$ in 2017 and there is new version 2 launched recently. All these small investments on top of your camera gear will improve your workflow and let you spend more time and energy on capturing the best pictures with peace of mind.

**Happy Birding**

For More info [https://www.gnarbox.com](https://www.gnarbox.com)



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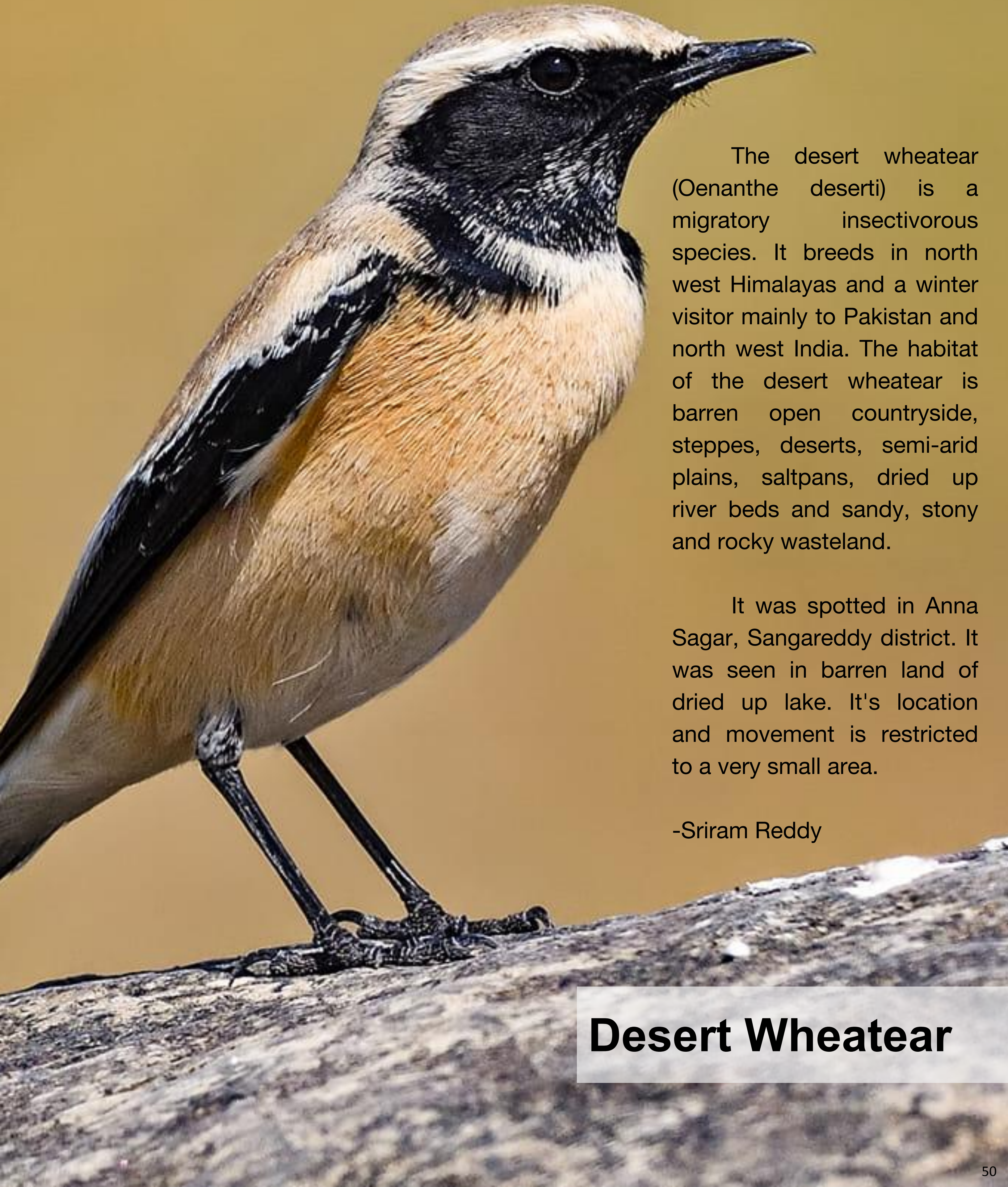
| VIEW | BACKUP | ORGANIZE | EDIT |
|---|---|---|---|
| Instantly view HD Photos and Videos | Securely backup of HD Photos/ Videos at up to 4 GB/min | Auto-organize your content by date, time, and GPS | Quickly create highlight reels or touch up photos |

# Notable Sightings
# In the last six months



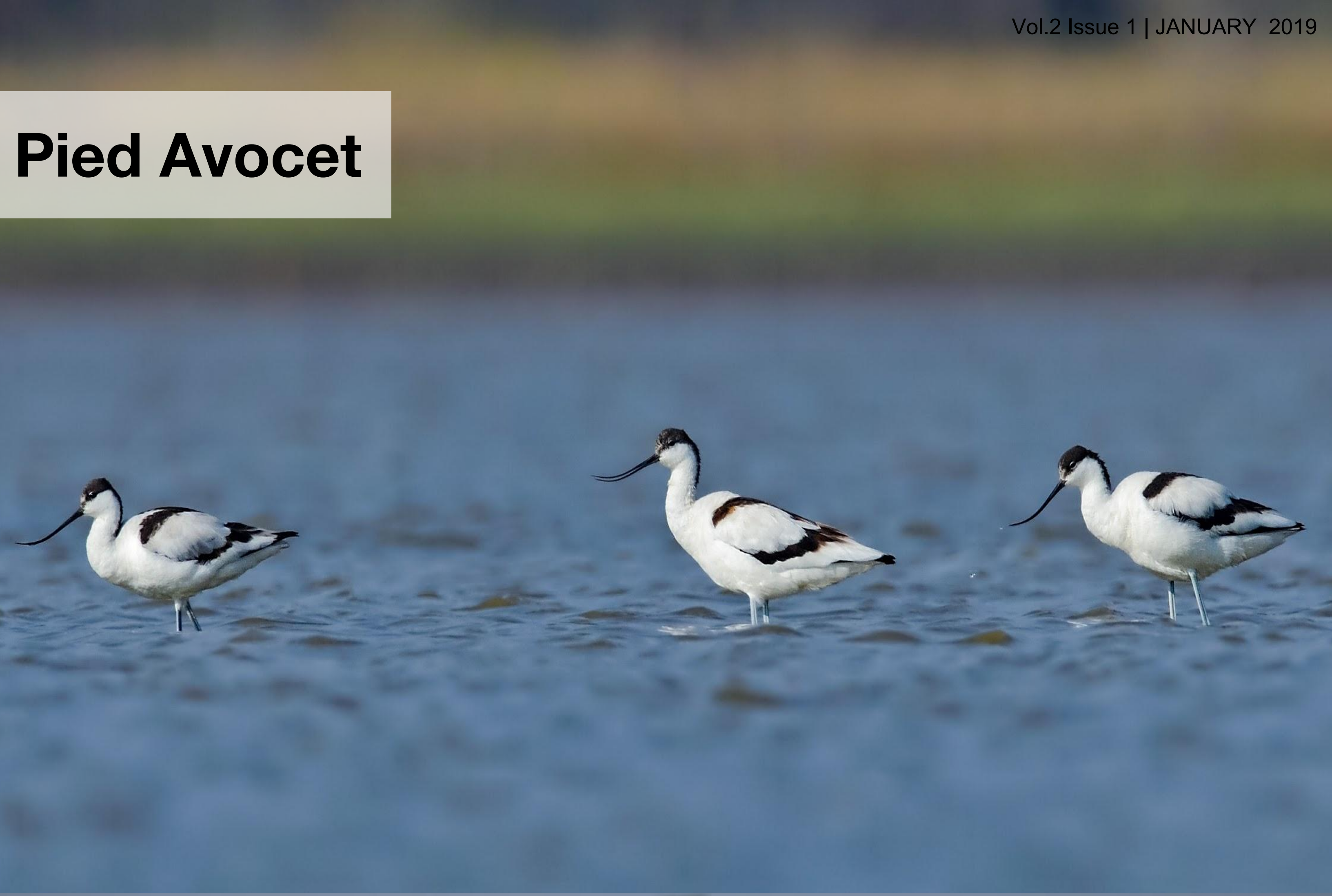
## Desert Wheatear

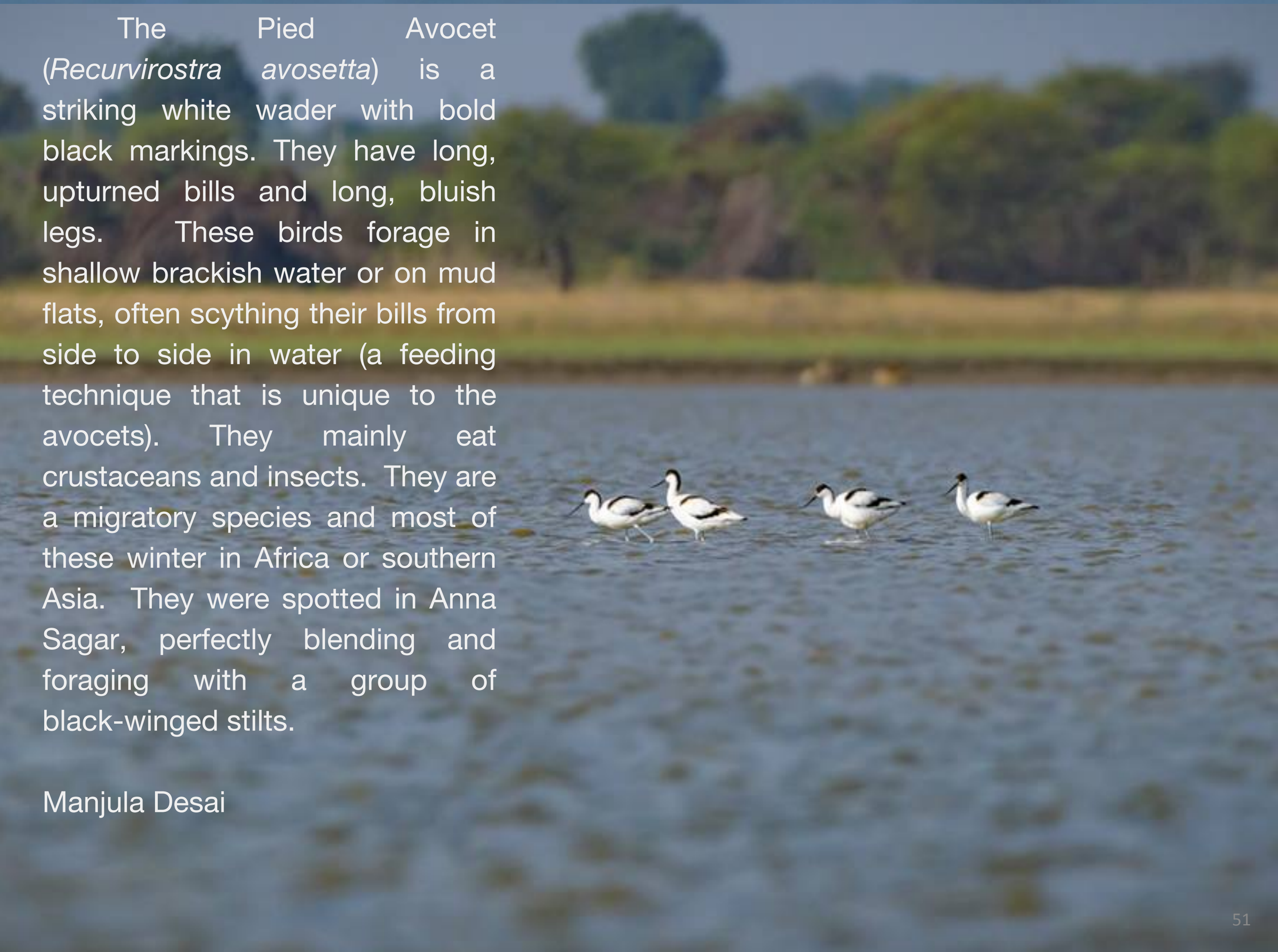
The desert wheatear (Oenanthe deserti) is a migratory insectivorous species. It breeds in north west Himalayas and a winter visitor mainly to Pakistan and north west India. The habitat of the desert wheatear is barren open countryside, steppes, deserts, semi-arid plains, saltpans, dried up river beds and sandy, stony and rocky wasteland.

It was spotted in Anna Sagar, Sangareddy district. It was seen in barren land of dried up lake. It's location and movement is restricted to a very small area.

-Sriram Reddy

# Pied Avocet





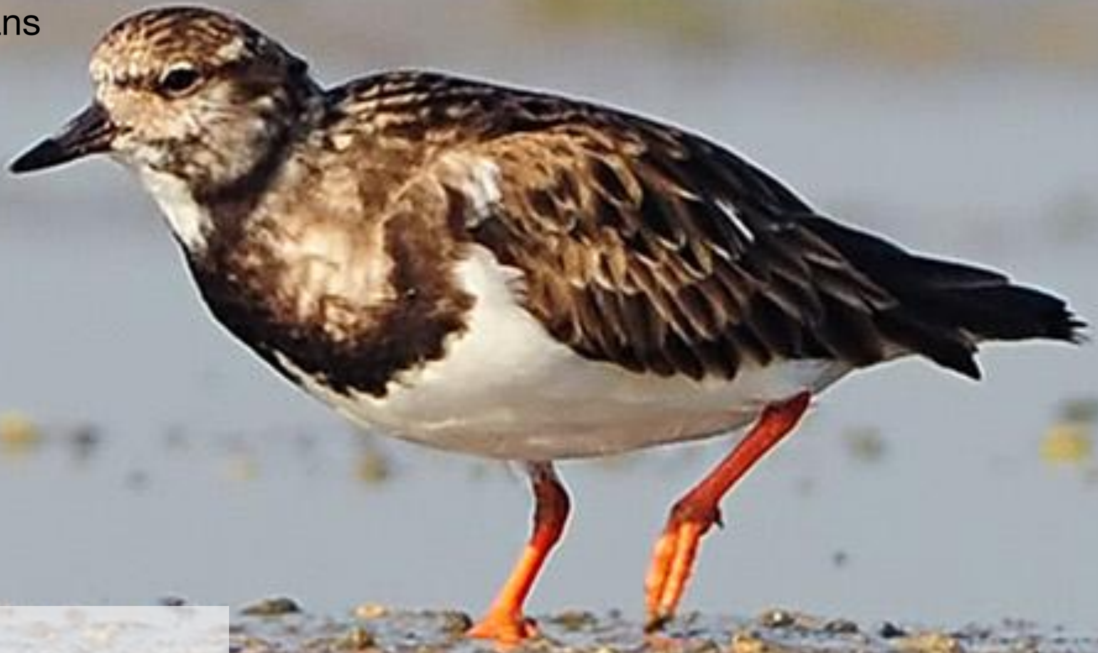
The Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) is a striking white wader with bold black markings. They have long, upturned bills and long, bluish legs. These birds forage in shallow brackish water or on mud flats, often scything their bills from side to side in water (a feeding technique that is unique to the avocets). They mainly eat crustaceans and insects. They are a migratory species and most of these winter in Africa or southern Asia. They were spotted in Anna Sagar, perfectly blending and foraging with a group of black-winged stilts.

Manjula Desai

# Ruddy Turnstone

The Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) is a small wader from the sandpiper family about 22-24cm long. Non-breeding males and females are fairly alike with females being duller. They have black upperparts with white fringes on the feathers and white underparts. The bill is black, short and slightly upturned at the tip. The legs are orange. During the breeding season the upper parts of the males turn chestnut. The head and the neck have black and white patterns. Like other waders, the ruddy turnstones feed on insects, crustaceans and some plant matter. They use their bills to probe into the sand and also to turn over small stones to catch any hidden prey. This behaviour gives them their name 'Turnstone'.

Ruddy turnstones have a wide distribution range and habitats range from the Arctic to the tropics. Their strong wings help them cover up to a 1000 kms a day during migration!! They build nests by scraping off vegetation or the bare ground and a single clutch consists of 2-5 eggs.



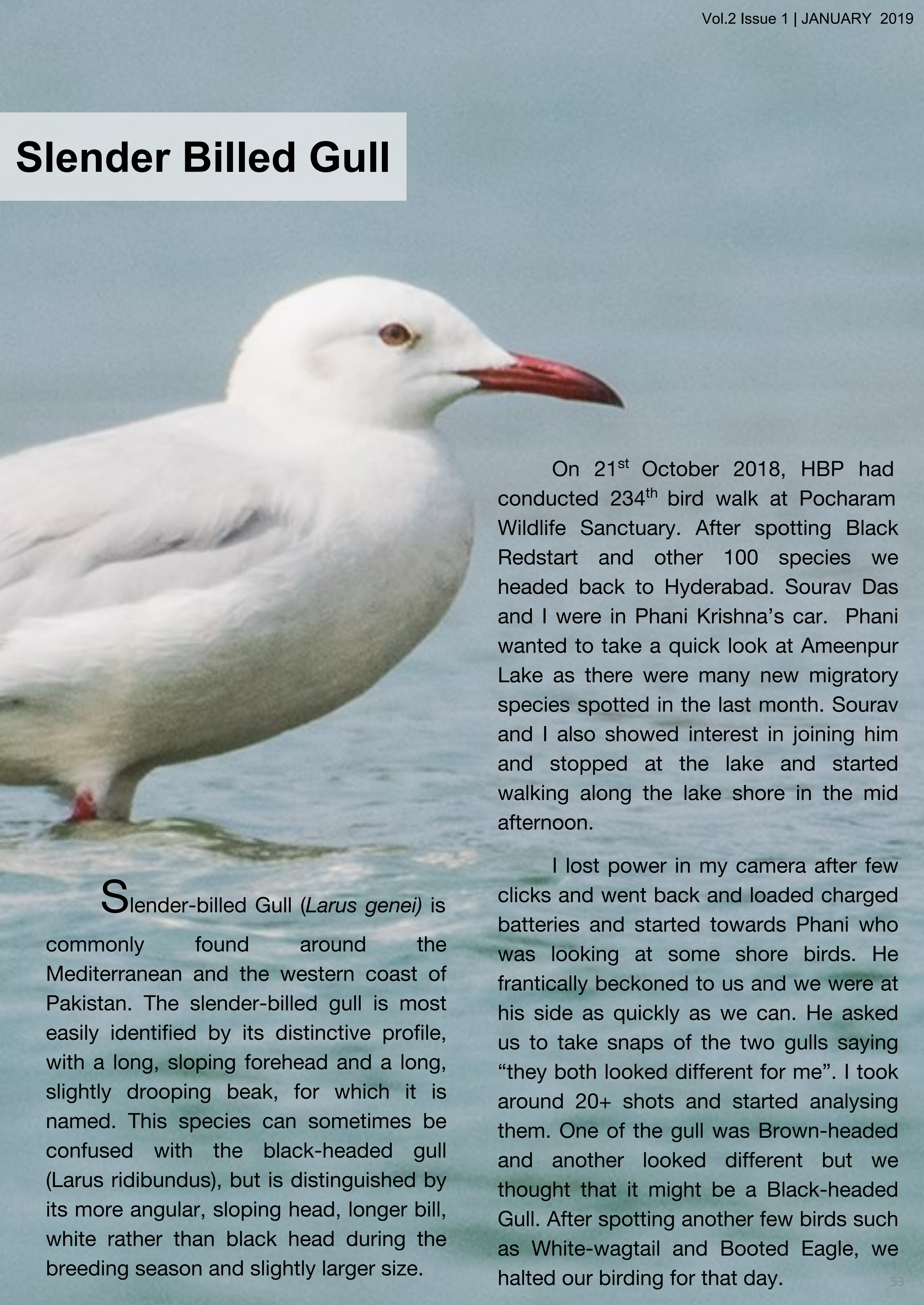
Picture: Nishant Shah - Ruddy Turnstone

In India, they are mostly found wintering in the coastal areas with other waders such as plovers, sandpipers and oystercatchers. During migration they may be found on inland wetlands. Ameenpur is one of the popular birding hotspots in Telangana. The lake attracts several migrants and often throws up some surprises. October 7 2018 was one such day when a Ruddy Turnstone happened to land before me while I was relishing the beauty of an uninterested looking Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*).

As soon as the un-commoner landed beside the plover it started foraging for a meal and I managed to click a couple of pictures for a record. I sensed that the bird seemed a little alarmed and before I could move another inch forward all the waders on the shoreline took off. They were petrified by the looming Brahminy Kite (*Haliastur indus*). Both the kite and I had to leave disappointed. But it was definitely a day to remember as I added a new species to my regional checklist of Telangana.

**- *Nishanth Shah***

# Slender Billed Gull



Slender-billed Gull (*Larus genei)* is commonly found around the Mediterranean and the western coast of Pakistan. The slender-billed gull is most easily identified by its distinctive profile, with a long, sloping forehead and a long, slightly drooping beak, for which it is named. This species can sometimes be confused with the black-headed gull (Larus ridibundus), but is distinguished by its more angular, sloping head, longer bill, white rather than black head during the breeding season and slightly larger size.

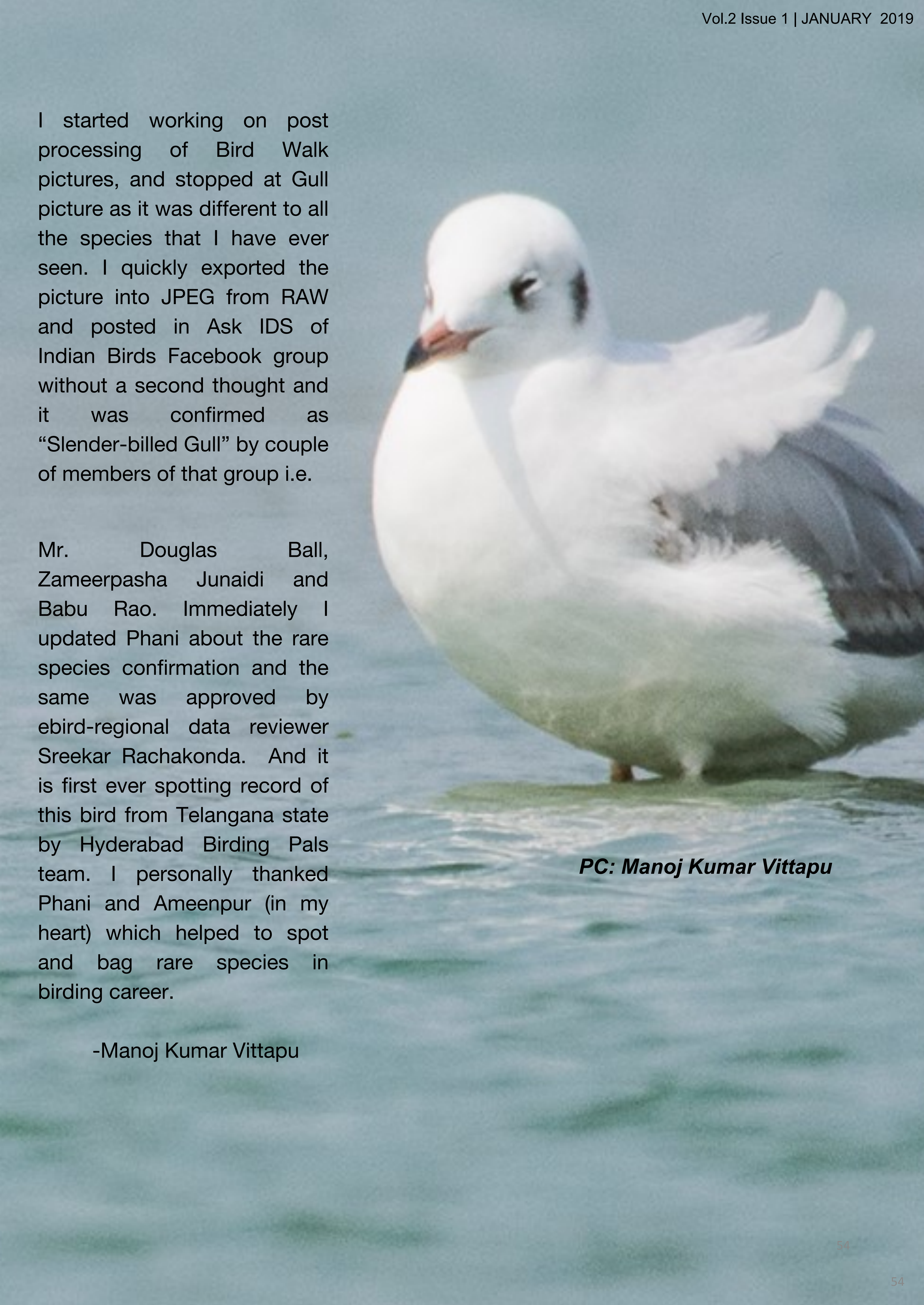
On 21st October 2018, HBP had conducted 234th bird walk at Pocharam Wildlife Sanctuary. After spotting Black Redstart and other 100 species we headed back to Hyderabad. Sourav Das and I were in Phani Krishna's car. Phani wanted to take a quick look at Ameenpur Lake as there were many new migratory species spotted in the last month. Sourav and I also showed interest in joining him and stopped at the lake and started walking along the lake shore in the mid afternoon.

I lost power in my camera after few clicks and went back and loaded charged batteries and started towards Phani who was looking at some shore birds. He frantically beckoned to us and we were at his side as quickly as we can. He asked us to take snaps of the two gulls saying "they both looked different for me". I took around 20+ shots and started analysing them. One of the gull was Brown-headed and another looked different but we thought that it might be a Black-headed Gull. After spotting another few birds such as White-wagtail and Booted Eagle, we halted our birding for that day.

I started working on post processing of Bird Walk pictures, and stopped at Gull picture as it was different to all the species that I have ever seen. I quickly exported the picture into JPEG from RAW and posted in Ask IDS of Indian Birds Facebook group without a second thought and it was confirmed as “Slender-billed Gull” by couple of members of that group i.e.

Mr. Douglas Ball, Zameerpasha Junaidi and Babu Rao. Immediately I updated Phani about the rare species confirmation and the same was approved by ebird-regional data reviewer Sreekar Rachakonda. And it is first ever spotting record of this bird from Telangana state by Hyderabad Birding Pals team. I personally thanked Phani and Ameenpur (in my heart) which helped to spot and bag rare species in birding career.

-Manoj Kumar Vittapu



***PC: Manoj Kumar Vittapu***

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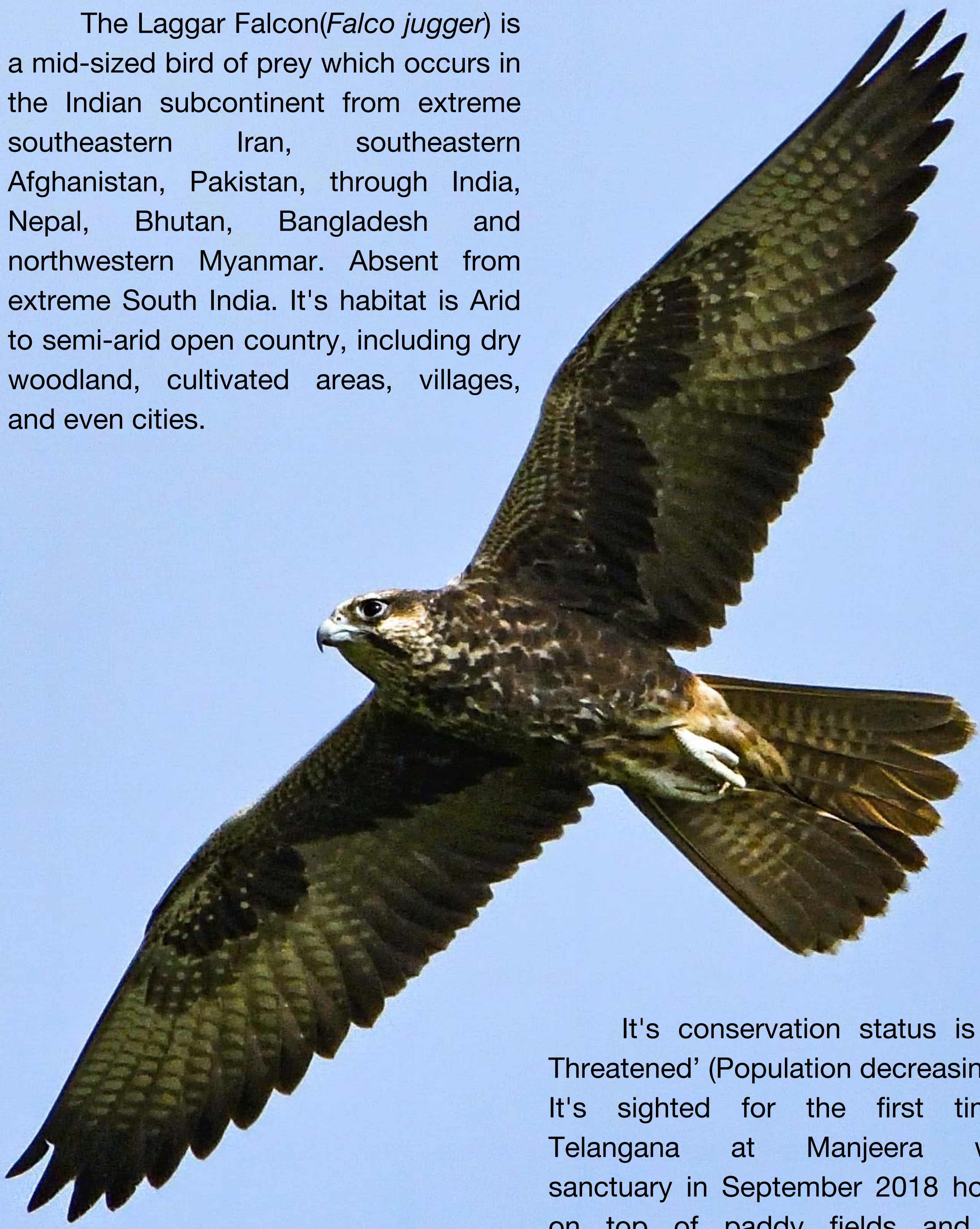
# Laggar Falcon

The Laggar Falcon(*Falco jugger*) is a mid-sized bird of prey which occurs in the Indian subcontinent from extreme southeastern Iran, southeastern Afghanistan, Pakistan, through India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and northwestern Myanmar. Absent from extreme South India. It's habitat is Arid to semi-arid open country, including dry woodland, cultivated areas, villages, and even cities.



It's conservation status is ‘Near Threatened’ (Population decreasing).
It's sighted for the first time in Telangana at Manjeera wildlife sanctuary in September 2018 hovering on top of paddy fields and lakes probably in search of food.

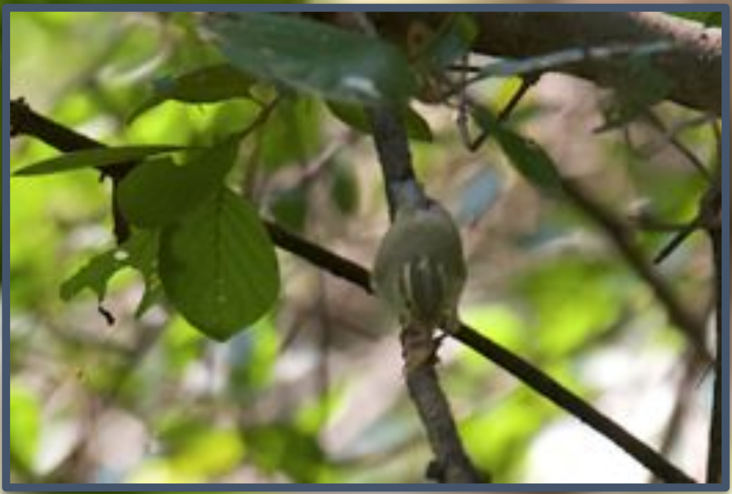
-Sriram Reddy

# Blyth's Leaf Warbler

**-Ashis Kumar Pradhan**

Blyth’s Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus reguloides)* was spotted in Ananthagiri hills (17°18’50.4”N 77°51’59.4”E), Vikarabad, Telangana, India. Leaf warblers are a group of small insectivorous passerine birds. Blyth’s leaf warbler named after Edward Blyth, is mainly found in Southeast Asia particularly in North eastern India along Himalayas and Southern China. It breeds in tropical mountain forests and winters in open forests and forest edges.

On 28-10-18, during 235th Bird walk conducted by Hyderabad Birding Pals to Ananthagiri Hills, one Blyth’s leaf warbler was spotted along with other leaf warblers.They look like a greenish warbler, western-crowned leaf warbler. It has more dark lateral crown stripes and green supercilium which distinguishes it from a western-crowned leaf warbler.



Every year Ananthagiri hills, mostly a dry deciduous forest surrounded by grasslands becomes a nice wintering ground for many warblers. Although Blyth’s leaf warbler is mostly found in North-eastern India, it is very uncommon in Southern India(incl. Telangana), but there is handful of records in winter from Tamilnadu, Chhattisgarh and Odisha as well.

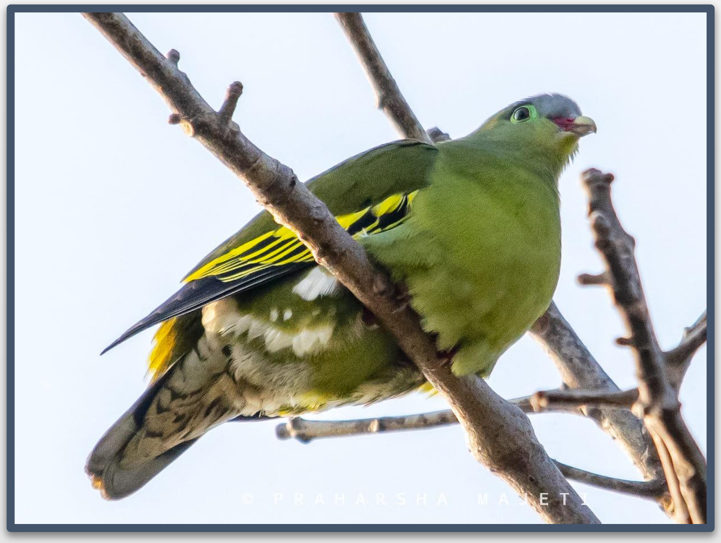
References:

1. https://ebird.org/map/blylew1.
2. Birds of Indian Subcontinent by Richard Grimmett.

# Thick Billed Green Pigeon

***Anand Kalinadhabatla***

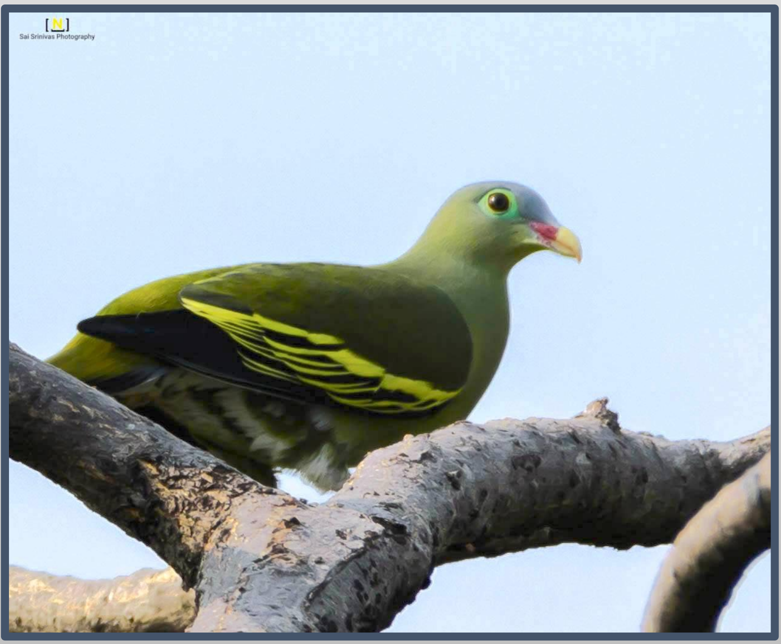
Hyderabad Birding Pals (HBP) conducted a birdwalk at Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary on December 1 and 2, 2018 coinciding with First Pakhal Bird Festival organised by Departments of Forests, Telangana. Approximately 40 participants attended the festival including few students of Forest Academy, Hyderabad. Pakhal village has a fresh water lake surrounded by moist deciduous forests with low hills and paddy cultivation.



PC: *Praharsha Majeti*

Thick-billed green pigeon (*Treron curvirostra*) like all other Pigeons is non-migratory species of bird in the family Columbidae. This bird is smaller at 26 cm compared to most other Green Pigeons. The thick green bill with prominent red at the base of the beak is an identification feature of this bird. This species is a resident of south-east Asian forests including NE India and West Bengal with sporadic records in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh (https://ebird.org/species/thbpig1). According to a research (https://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/25/nyregion/thecity/25fyi.html) Pigeons have a good homing ability and can return from long distances, if removed from a nesting area. When pigeons are a few months old, they imprint their location in their brain as "home" and will always return there.

On December 2, around noon, a small group of people ascended a small hill, right next to the TSTDC cottages Pakhal (https://goo.gl/maps/ 4mRgY1ZqLoC2) in search of birds. Chetan Sai Ineni, youngest (10yrs) of the group saw a Pigeon on a deciduous tree partially devoid of leaves. The group quickly identified the Pigeon as Thick-billed Green Pigeon (Treron curvirostra) female, based on its unique and easily identifiable characteristics. For the next few hours, the Pigeon barely moved from the hill area giving most participants of bird walk an opportunity to see and photograph it. A single bird was seen feeding on the Ficus fruits in the area for a week after the initial sighting on 2nd December, 2018.



PC: *Sai Srinivas Vemuri*

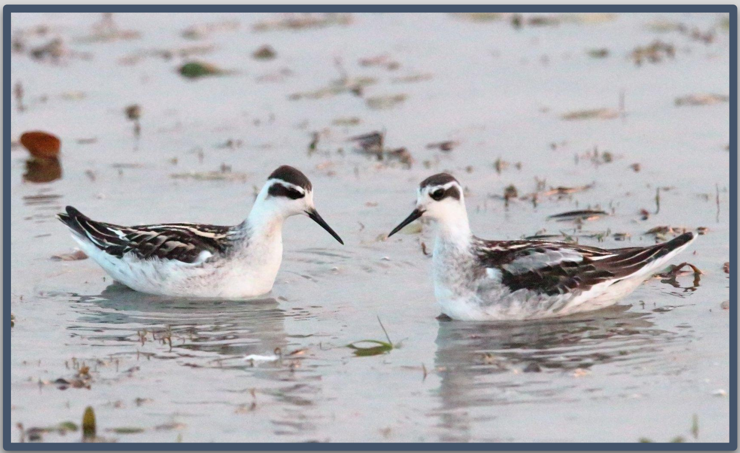
# Red Necked Phalarope

***Kalyan Ineni***

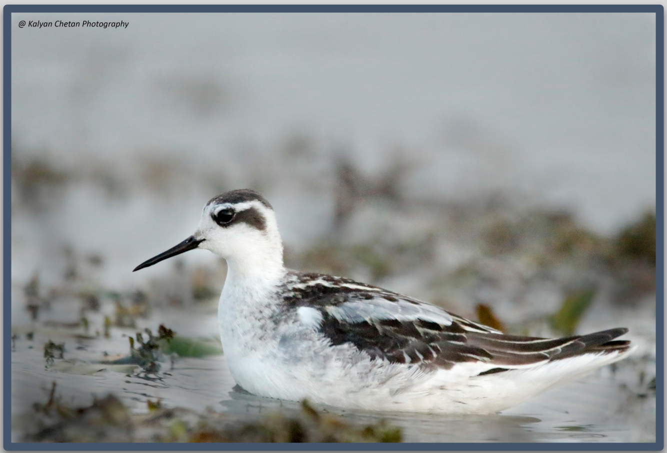
Red-necked Phalarope is a winter visitor, mainly in offshore waters of Pakistan, NW and SE India and Sri Lanka. Typically seen swimming. More delicately built than Grey Phalarope, with a finer bill. Adult breeding has white throat and red stripe down side of grey neck. Adult non-breeding has prominent black mask and cap, with dark line running down hind neck, has darker grey upper parts than Grey Phalarope, with white edges to mantle and scapular feathers, forming fairly distinct lines. Juvenile has dark grey upper parts with Orange-buff mantle and scapular lines.

When feeding, a red-necked phalarope will often swim in a small, rapid circle, forming a small whirlpool. This behaviour is thought to aid feeding by raising food from the bottom of shallow water.

On 16th September 2018 after completing the Narsapur Birdwalk by HBP, we wanted to explore the Osman sagar. Me, Sarath Babu, Dasari Vijay, Chaitanya and Master Chetan reached Osman Sagar lake around 4.30 PM. When we reached, there was no proper light and we went ahead looking for the water birds. After moving some distance we noticed Black winged stilts are searching for food at shore side. Along with them we noticed two small water birds are moving in shallow water and searching for food. WOW, those are Red-necked phalaropes. I recollected the previous record by RK Balaji in April 2018 at Ameenpur and by John Peters in September 2018 at Ameenpur in this season. We clicked record shots and confirmed those are Red necked Phalaropes and slowly moved to get a decent clicks of them. We were able to get the record shots, since the climate is cloudy and light faded out early on that day.



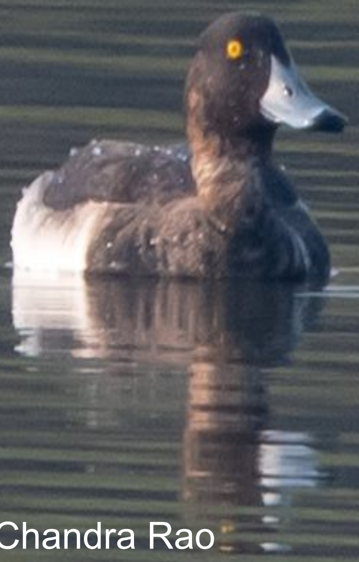
Picture: Satish Avunoori



Picture: Chetan Sai Chowdary Ineni

# Tufted Duck

**Kalyan Ineni**



PC: Poorna Chandra Rao

Tufted Duck is winter visitor to almost all parts of India. It is sexual dimorphic and males are marginally larger than females. In breeding males, colour is glossy black, crest prominent and flanks white. Duller immature males with flanks in greyish and crest is less pronounced. Dusky brown females with flanks being paler; scaup-like white face patch in some females. Usually tufted nape and squarer head is also seen. Yellow iris in females which is also in female Common, and Baer's Pochard and Ferruginous but it is darker.

The species is omnivorous ( mainly feeds on molluscs, zebra mussels, crustaceans and aquatic insects as well as grain and the seeds and vegetative parts of aquatic plants).

For breeding period it prefer lowland regions and shows a more preference for eutrophic waters 3-5 m deep with open water, islands and abundant marginal and emergent vegetation. They are commonly found in large, freshwater lakes, ponds, reservoirs, gravel-pits and quiet stretches. During non-breeding period prefer large freshwater lakes, reservoirs and sheltered coastal locations such as brackish lagoons, brackish inland seas, tidal bays and estuaries although it avoids strong wave action.

PC: Chetan Sai Chowdary Ineni

Its was noticed and clicked in our 239th bird walk at Manjeera Dam by Chetan Sai Chowdary Ineni. It was moving with Red crested pochards.

# Dunlin

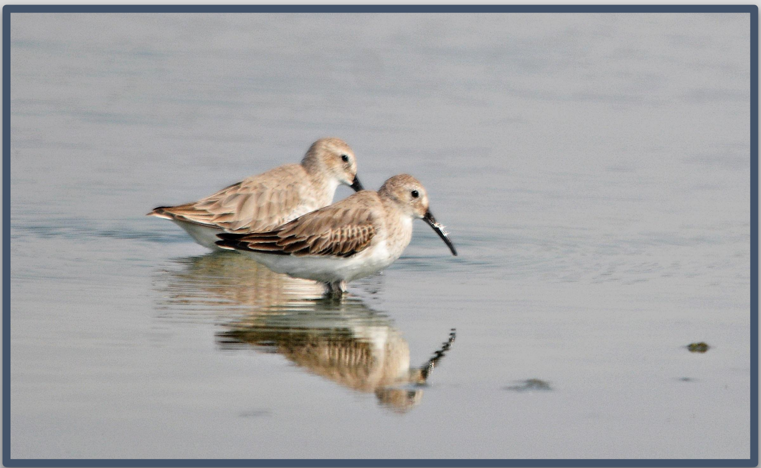
**Mulagala Srinivas**

## The sighting of Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) in Hyderabad

The Dunlin is one of the smallest of the waders that migrate to the warmer Middle East, South and Southeast Asia during the winters from the North & Central Europe and Asia.

Hyderabad and around being in the central peninsular plains of the Deccan plateau almost act as a winter home for an array of migrating birds from these extreme colder parts of Central Europe and Asia.

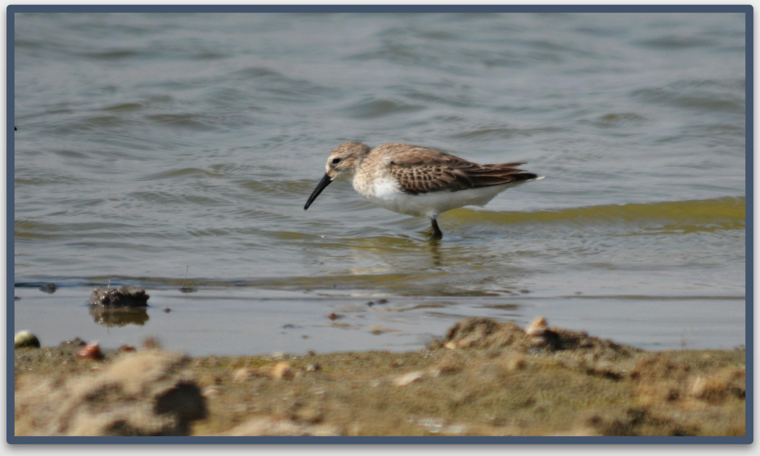
Highly gregarious in nature during winter the Dunlin mingles within flocks of other Calidris (more likely Little Stints and Curlew Sandpipers in our areas) and sometimes Charadrius (likely Little Ringed Plovers in our area).Though more commonly sighted along the coasts of India but being long distance migrants is not difficult for them to wander inland and can be seen occasionally around the muddy wetlands and farmlands alongside bigger water bodies in peninsular plains of India.



Picture: Mulagala Srinivas - Dunlin

The distinctive feature of the Dunlin from the other common Calidris that can be seen with them in and around Hyderabad i.e. Little Stints is it's fairly *long slightly de-curved (outer half) bill with a blunt end,*size a bit larger about 18cm (than the Little Stint 14 cm) and most other features remain similar to the Little Stint during winters (in non-breeding plumages).

Note: The Curlew Sandpiper which has most similar features has a longer and more evenly decurved bill with slightly sharper end than the Dunlin's blunt end.



Picture: Mulagala Srinivas - Dunlin

But the summer (breeding) plumage of the Dunlin has its most distinctive feature i.e. the black belly which is not found in any other of its family which shows a black-belly patch with a white breast and can be made out easily among the mixed flocks. Thus the Dunlin is also known as the Black-bellied Sandpiper also.

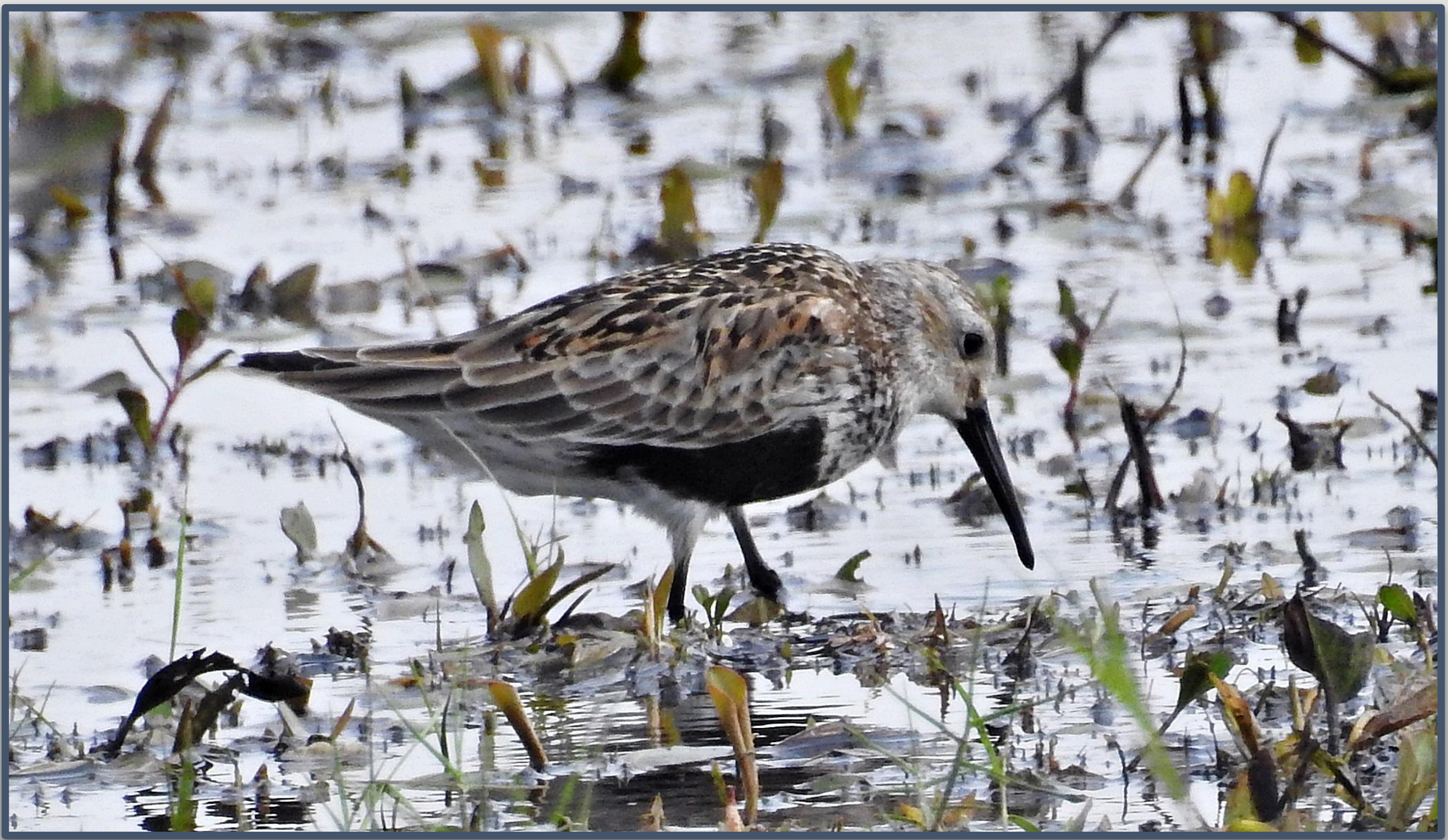
However it is not common to be seen in such plumage around our areas unless some over- summering migrants make their way thus far.

My personal sighting of the Dunlin in Hyderabad began as early as the first official Big Bird Day in Hyderabad attended by self along with Anshuman Jha, Subrat Sundar Ray (all three members of the HBD now), M.Ravi and Tanmay Haldar on the 16th February 2014 at Ameenpur but did not get the picture on that day.

The next sighting was at Ameenpur again on the 21st December 2014 along with Rajeev Khandelwal, Anshuman Jha,Harikrishna Adepu (and a few members more whom I cannot recollect) where a lovely pair of Dunlin showed up quite separately in the shallows near the fishermen's open market on the water tank side and having seen them quite often on the coast could immediately make out the bill from the Stints and got good pictures then. Also had good sightings of Oriental Pratincole, Lesser Sand Plover ,Small Pratincole, Oriental Skylark, White Wagtail and Yellow Wagtails.

The next sighting was at Ameenpur again on the 25th January 2015 along with Subrat Sundar Ray and Tapas Misra (a good friend and a senior birder from Delhi visiting us) and were rewarded with lovely pictures of a pair of Dunlin amongst Little Stints,Little Ringed Plovers, Sandpipers (Wood,Common and a Marsh also),Curlew Sandpiper and a Lesser Sand Plover on the foreshore on the opposite side of the lake this time.We also had a wonderful sighting of a majestic Short-toed Snake Eagle.

Then again on the 23rd September, 2018 along with the group including Sudeshna Dey, Kalyan Ineni, Chetan Sai Ineni, Sriram Reddy and Manjula Desai at Osman Sagar amongst a group of mixed waders was a lone Dunlin in summering plumage with the black belly distinctly visible. It was the black patches on the flanks indeed that caught my eye (as the rest of the birders group have scantily glanced at the overall flock of Little Stints and wandered away).Lovely individual with the typical rapid "sewing machine" pecking with clear black flanks and messy patches on the belly over a bright and distinct pattern of the scapulars with black centres with rufous and white edges.



Picture: Mulagala Srinivas - Dunlin

# Whimbrel

### Bhaarat Vyas

The **Whimbrel** (*Numenius phaeopus*) is a wader in the large family Scolopacidae. It is one of the most widespread of the Curlews, breeding across much of subarctic North America, Asia and Europe as far south as Scotland. The **whimbrel** is a **migratory** bird wintering on coasts in Africa, southern North America, South America, and South Asia into Australasia. It is also a coastal bird during **migration**. The conservation status is least concern.

**Whimbrels** are large shorebirds with long, decurved bills. They are smaller in size than the similar-looking Long-billed Curlew, and their bills are shorter. The Whimbrel has a distinct head pattern, with dark-and-light alternating stripes. The rest of its plumage is plain mottled-brown overall, and does not vary season to season. In flight, it appears brown all over, with a white belly. Its bill is solid black in summer and has a pinkish or reddish base during winter.

This species feeds by probing soft mud for small invertebrates and by picking small crabs and similar prey off the surface. Before migration, berries become an important part of their diet. It has also been observed taking insects, specifically blue tiger butterflies.

The nest is a bare scrape on tundra or Arctic moorland. Three to five eggs are laid. Adults are very defensive of nesting area and will even attack humans who come too close.Near the end of the 19th century, hunting on their migration routes took a heavy toll on this bird's numbers; the population has since recovered.

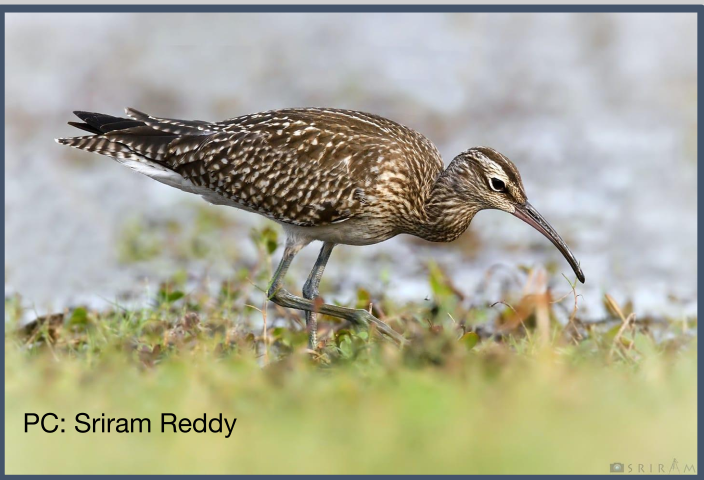
## Hotspot & Sighting Details

Last it was sighted in Jan 2016 at Edulabad Lake and later it was sighted in Sept 2018 at Osman Sagar Lake. It was a coincidence that the Birdwalk #224 was advanced and we were not aware about the same. We reached the meeting point but nobody came; it was surprise to us and later where we have checked the status it was already over a day before i.e. 01$^{st}$ September 2018. Still Vyom and myself has decided to explore alone at Osman Sagar and while we were returning, suddenly a big bird with the curved bill appeared and Vyom clicked the image and identified instantly as Whimbrel. In Whimbrel two subspecies are found – Hudsonian & European. We sighted the European subspecies as it has a white rump.

Proud Member of HBP – Bhaarat Vyas

**Credits**

1. Wikipedia
2. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Whimbrel/lifehistory
3. http://www.birdweb.org/birdweb/bird/whimbrel



PC: Sriram Reddy

# Banded Bay Cuckoo

**Bhaarat Vyas**

The **banded bay cuckoo** or **bay-banded cuckoo** (*Cacomantis sonneratii*) is a species of small cuckoo found in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. They are usually found in well wooded areas mainly in the lower hills. The Banded bay cuckoo does not approach the threshold limit for being vulnerable. Loss of habitat is the main threat that may endanger the survival of these species.

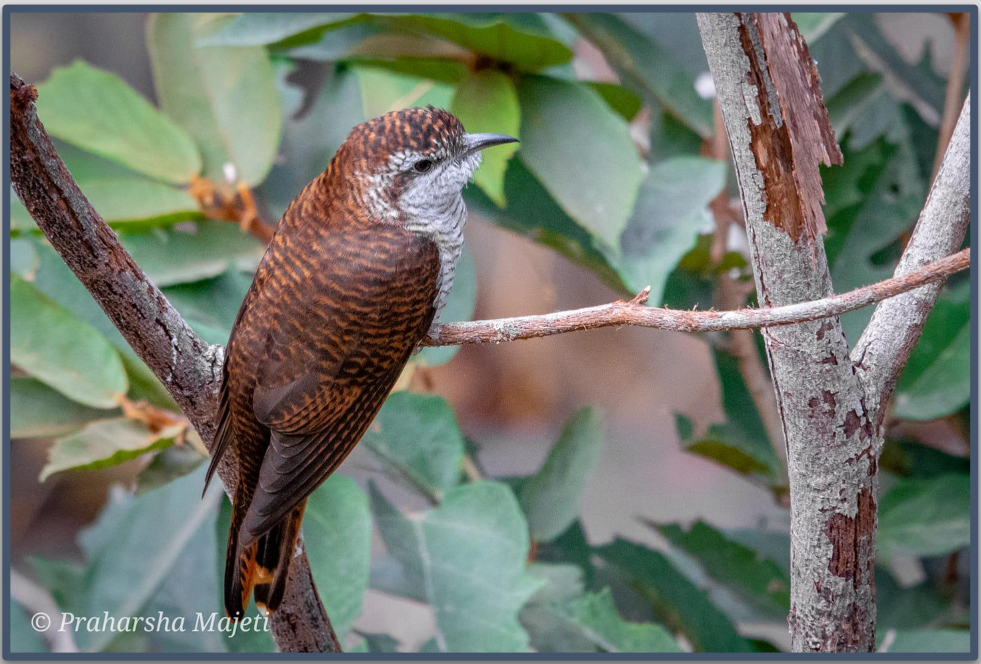
The adults are bright rufous or bay on the head and back and are broadly barred with dark brown. The bill is long and slightly curved. A whitish supercilium is distinctive above a dark eye-line. The tail has a subterminal black band and white tips to the feathers. The sexes are alike. The iris is yellow and the bill is black while the base of the lower mandible is greenish grey. The juvenile is similar but has a pale lower mandible and white fringes to the feathers of the upper body.

The Banded bay Cuckoo is a partially migratory bird. The populations in Southeast Asia are found to be resident. The population in India is migratory and found mainly during monsoon season. Post breeding juvenile's may disappear and establish in new locations within the range. They make local movement for feeding and breeding within their range.

The overall length is about 22 cm making it about the same size as the syntopic *Cacomantis merulinus* and *Cacomantis variolosus*. The hepatic forms of those can be similar but supercilium, long beak and barred tail distinguish this species.

## Hotspot & Sighting Details

It has been last sighted in Dec 2017 at the same place as the habitat is perfect for the individual. As team members have gone for the bird walk # 240 at Pakhal we missed the chance, so Srinivas has made the plan along with the Praharsha, Poorna, Sarfroz and myself to visit Uma Maheshwaram. This was my 1st visit and seen all the targeted species. After an exhaustive morning session, we were all very tired and wanted to call it a day. But, as we sat and clicked some photographs of Long-billed Sunbird, Golden–fronted Leafbird and Indian Blackbird, and out of nowhere appeared this one individual that came and sat on an open perch. I informed others and we started clicking away thinking that this bird is an Eurasian Wryneck. After reaching home, as usual, Vyom decided to check all the photographs and identified that the bird was indeed a Banded–Bay Cuckoo and not a Eurasian Wryneck. It was great lifer for all of us.



Picture: Praharsha Majeti: Banded Bay Cuckoo

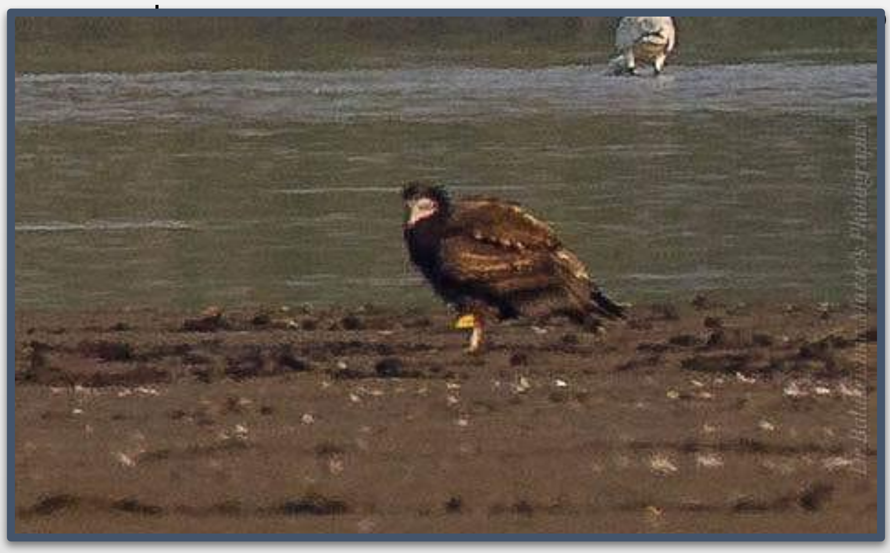
Credits :
1.Wikipedia
2.https://indianbirds.thedynamicnature.com/2017/03/banded-bay-cuckoo-cacomantis-sonneratii.html

# Egyptian Vulture

**Dr. Balakrishna Marar**

HOW LUCKY CAN I GET

It all started with news about the arrival of Pied Avocet (on a Saturday Nov3rd) at Anna Sagar lake, Jogipet, NH161, on Hyderabad-Degloor Road about 89 km from Hyderabad. Heard about it for the first time through a post on May7th,2016 "Get set for the Avocet" by Rahul Rallan, it was a lone visitor. By the time on the next day to the post lots of birders visited the lake with no luck. I didn't want to wait till the weekend, With a vacation coming up on a Tuesday Nov6th (Diwali), on Monday I started calling fellow birding pals for company, with most of them working for MNCs only Fareed bhai Aka Raptorbaaz & Shashi Kotte readily agreed



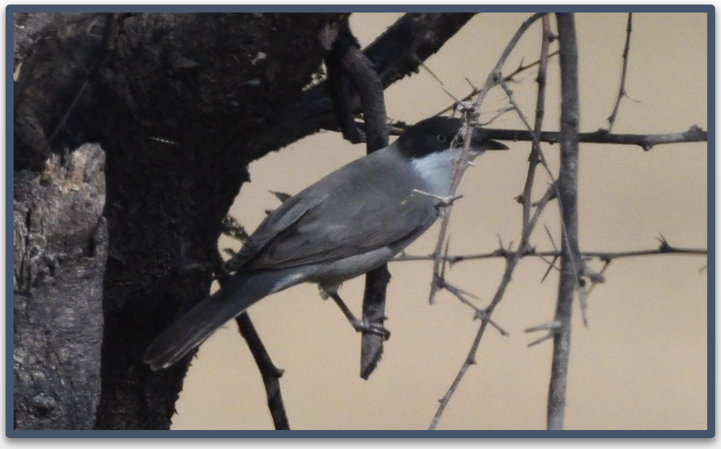
Picture: Balakrishna Marar : Egyptian Vulture

We Three Musketeers started at 5;15am from my place, reached at the lake at 7:15am plenty of Flamingos waddling in the water, lots of Black Winged Stilts,Northern Shovelers, Sandpipers, Stints, Plovers, Wagtails, Godwit, Grey Heron, River Terns but no sight of Avocets.

Thanks to Fareed, he spotted the Avocets at the far end of the lake around 7:29am along with some Glossy Ibis. So we three decided to walk around the shore to get some close shots. Started walking in the lake bed on the cracked clay, it was wet & Slushy, we were sinking ankle deep with each step, collecting lots of clay on our boots.We were clicking the birds after every few meters. The Avocets were a bit more close than the previous shot. Then we hit a water logged path from where we could not venture any further, that's when a Marsh Harrier & a Black eared kite made its appearance & the Pied Avocets took flight there were 11 of them got a few shots of them flying. Shashi, Fareed & I sat down to munch on some cream Bun that we had picked up on the way. Munching on I started panning the lake with my camera at 200mm, clicking frame after frame at the groups of birds & in few of the frames at around 7:58am I found a black bird with a pale head.In the bright sunlight & on the camera monitor, I took it to be a Marsh Harrier. After finishing the snacks we started walking back taking shots of birds in flight & at around 10am we called it a day. It all boiled down to early morning on the Nov8th around 4:15am, I was editing the pictures. After an almost 100% crop on one of the frames of the group of birds clicked, I found this one odd looking bird, not very sure of what it could be I sent a Message to Sriram Reddy with a JPEG cropped image at around 6am. I got a reply after about an hour, "No other shot?" & a email ID follows with a request for the RAW file, I send a mail & within 10 minutes I get a reply from Sriram "That is Egyptian Vulture" Congratulations.
I went to take picture of Pied Avocet & came back with a Jackpot Shot.
HOW LUCKY CAN I GET.........

# Eastern Orphean Warbler

**Sriram Reddy**



Picture: Sriram Reddy : Orphean Warbler

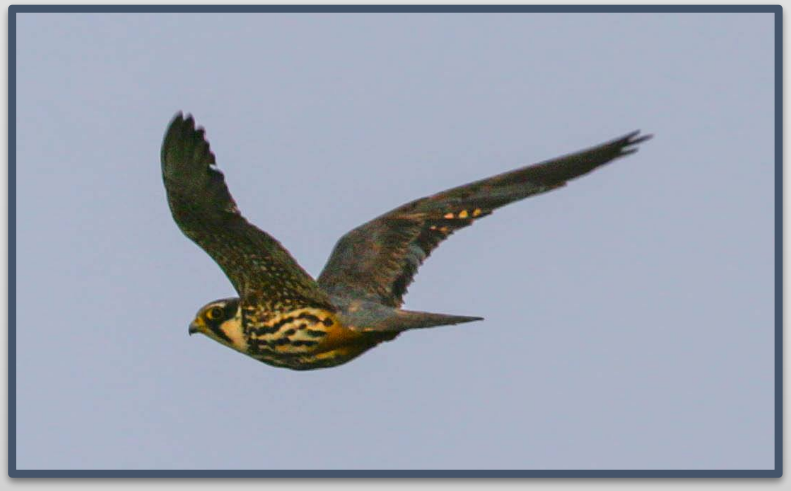
The eastern Orphean warbler (*Sylvia crassirostris*) is a typical warbler of the genus Sylvia. This is a summer visitor to Pakistan and winters mainly in India.

It's larger and bigger-billed than lesser whitethroat. The adult males have a plain grey back. The bill is long and pointed and the legs black. The male has a dark grey head, black eye mask, and white throat. The iris is white. Females and immature have a paler head and reddish underparts; their grey back has a brownish tinge. The iris is dark in young birds.

It was sighted at Anna Sagar, Sangareddy district. It was seen in Acacia trees hopping from one tree to another. Couple of more sightings of Orphean Warbler were reported in Bolaram, Secunderabad by MVN Vinay and at Ameenpur during HBP 186th Birdwalk..

# Eurasian Hobby

**Pradeep Nair**



Picture: Pradeep Nair : Eurasian Hobby

The Eurasian Hobby (*Falco subbuteo),* or just simply Hobby, is a small slim falcon. It belongs to a rather close-knit group of similar falcons often considered a subgenus Hypotriorchis.

This species breeds across Africa, Europe and Asia. It is a long-distance migrant, wintering in Africa and Asia.

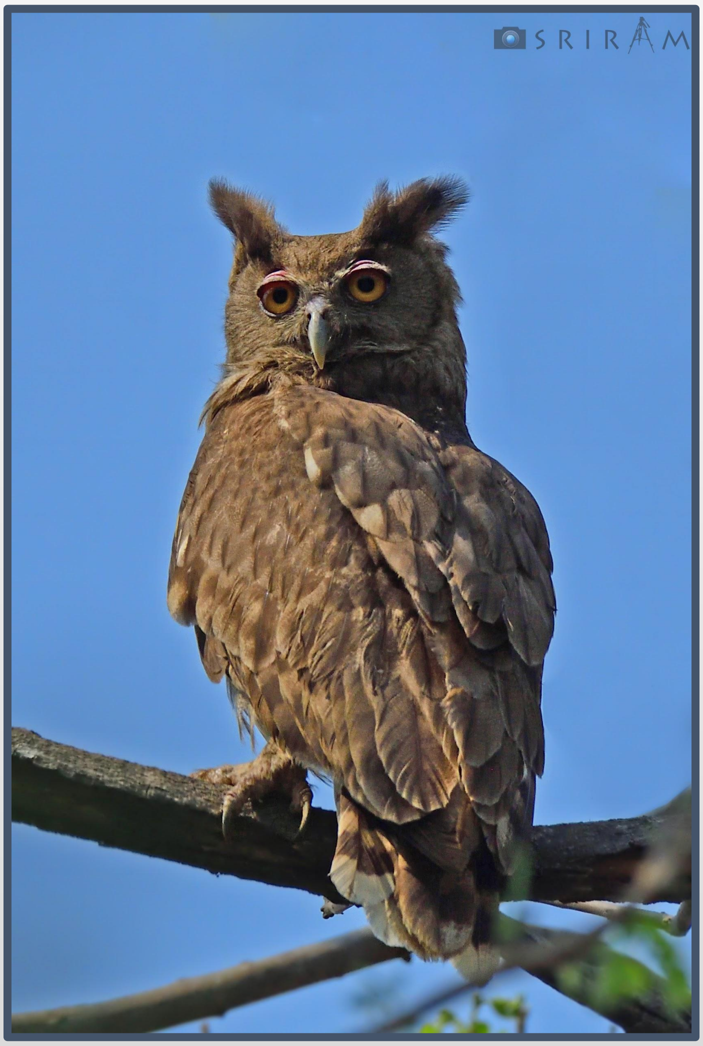
The Eurasian hobby hunts on the wing, often at dusk, using its rapid and acrobatic flight to out-manoeuvre even the most agile prey. The diet consists mainly of flying insects, which are usually eaten in flight, as well as small birds, particularly swallows, martins and swifts. Other prey, such as bats and lizards, are also occasionally taken, and the Hobby often follows fires or farm vehicles, which flush out prey.

The sighting of Eurasian Hobby at Ameenpur Lake was reported by Pradeep Nair. This bird was spotted at dusk and it was probably hunting for its food.

# Dusky Eagle Owl

***Sriram Reddy***

The Dusky eagle-owl (*Bubo coromandus*) is a large greyish-brown owl with prominent ear tufts. It's distribution is widespread in North and Central India.



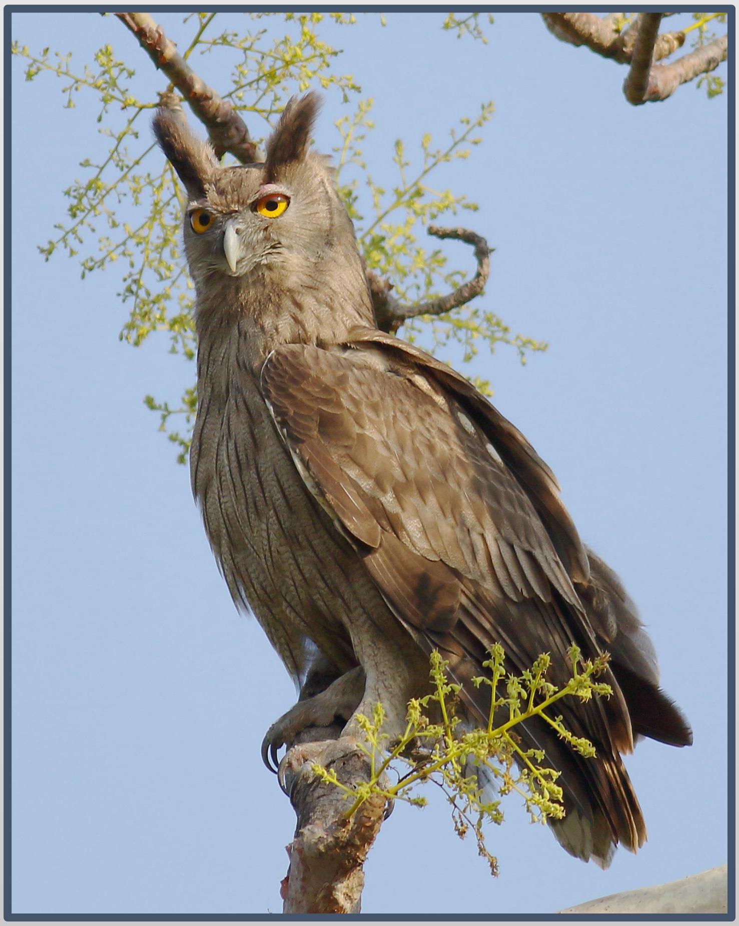
Picture: Sriram Reddy - Dusky Eagle Owl

Although not completely nocturnal, the Dusky eagle-owl usually spends the daytime in the seclusion of a shady bough or foliage, becoming active about an hour before sunset. They have been observed on the move and hunting in the day. They are usually found in pairs, and are very faithful to localities.

The nesting season is from November to April. The nest is made of sticks in the fork of the trunk of a large tree preferably near water and often in the vicinity of human habitation.

Dusky eagle-owl feed on small mammals, birds, reptiles, frogs, fish, and large insects.

In Telangana, it was first sighted in the Month of February, 2018 at Pakhal wildlife Sanctuary. It shares his habitat with other owls in the region.



Picture: Amarendra Konda - Dusky Eagle Owl

# Common Grasshopper Warbler

***Kalyan Ineni***

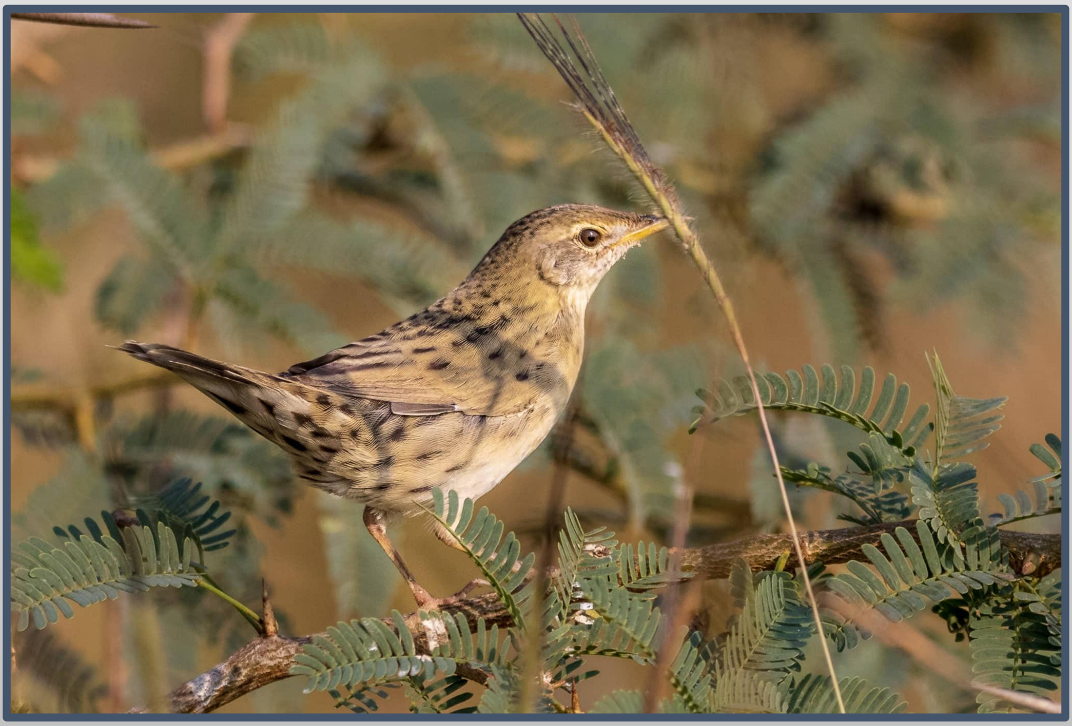
Grasshopper warbler is uncommon to locally fairly common summer migrant from winter grounds in Africa. The common grasshopper warbler breeds in north west Europe and parts of western Asia. The range includes Spain, France, central Italy, Romania, Yugoslavia, the British Isles, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, southern Sweden, southern Finland, the Baltic States and western parts of Russia. In late summer, it migrates to north west Africa, India and Sri Lanka where it overwinters.

They have fine streaking on throat, breast and flanks and stronger and better defined streaking on upperparts. It is smaller and has shorter tail and stouter bill. The plumage has warmer brown upper-parts and warmer buff flanks, they lack yellow on their underparts. Some other Warblers (Sedge and Laceolated) can be very similar to Grasshopper, but streaking on undertail coverts is blacker and more clear cut and less extensive. The tertials are darker with clear-cut pale edges.

The common grasshopper warbler is insectivorous, feeding on a wide range of invertebrates. Its diet includes flies, moths, beetles, aphids, dragonflies and mayflies and their larvae. Spiders and woodlice are also eaten and the chicks are fed on aphids, green caterpillars, woodlice and flies.

They are found in marshes, scrub and bushes around reedbeds. It is also found in wet grassland, emergent vegetation of waterbodies and ditches and also occurs at the edges of cultivated fields.

It was sighted on our 239th birdwalk at Manjeera Dam. Photos clicked by Subash Chandar and Chetan Sai Chowdary Ineni. This was sighted at grasslands near the water sluice at the edge of the left side water tank bund.



Picture: Subash Chandar : Grasshopper Warbler

# Lesser Black Backed Gull

***Bhaarat Vyas***

## Description & Habitat

The **Lesser Black-backed Gull (Steppe)** *(Larus fuscus barabensis)*is a large gull that breeds on the Atlantic coasts of Europe. It is migratory, wintering from the British Isles south to West Africa. It is a regular winter visitor to the east coast of North America, probably from the breeding population in Iceland.

## Subspecies

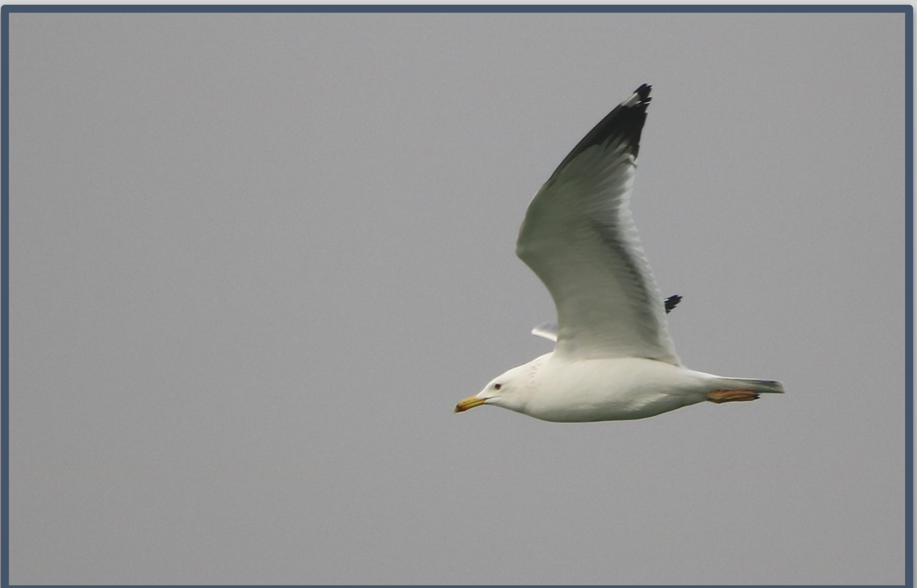
There are five subspecies:

- *L. f. graellsii* – Brehm, 1857: Greenland, Iceland, Faroe Islands, British Isles, western Europe.
- *L. f. intermedius* – Schiøler, 1922: Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, southwest Sweden.
- *L. f. fuscus* – Linnaeus, 1758: northern Norway, Sweden & Finland to the White Sea.
- *L. f. heuglini* – Bree, 1876: northern Russia to north-central Siberia. Known as Heuglin's gull, this was previously considered a separate species.
- *L. f. barabensis* – Johansen, 1960: central Asia

**Lesser Black-backed Gulls** are slender, long-winged gull slightly smaller than Herring Gull. Common in Europe; population in North America has increased dramatically in the last couple decades; now regular on the Atlantic coast, rarer inland and farther west. Adults show dark gray back and yellow legs; in winter note fairly heavy streaking on head and neck. On first- or second-year birds, look for contrastingly whitish head with dark smudge around the eye, long wings, dark bill, whitish rump and tail base, and evenly dark wings in flight, can be found around any body of water but prefers beaches, often with flocks of other large gulls.

## Hotspot & Sighting Details

We can describe these sighting as coincidence or to complete my 500 species. Ameenpur is really a magical place where many surprises are seen. We usually find black and brown headed gulls in this region but the identification is confirmed on one of the leading ID portal Mr. Douglas Ball as recommended the portal Western Palearctic Gulls for more clarification regarding the subspecies and cycle. Once registered in the portal – I come to know the depth and complication to identify the gulls. In that it has been identified as – 3cy barabensis as pale mantel and finished primary moult (as opposed to heuglini), more black in the wing tips than cachinnans, bright yellow legs.

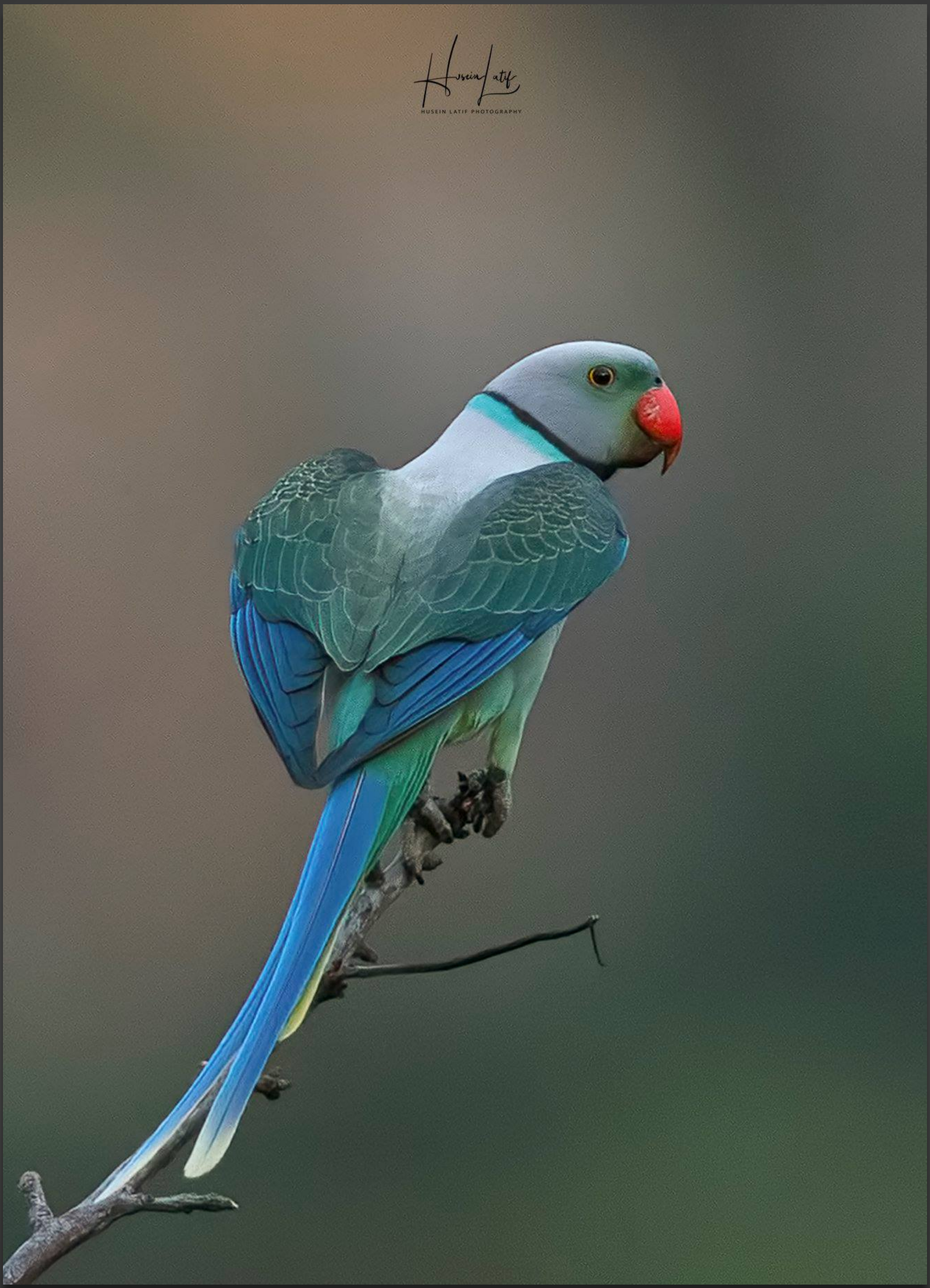


Picture: Bhaarat Vyas : Lesser black-backed Gull

Credits

1. Wikipedia
2. https://ebird.org/species/lbbgul

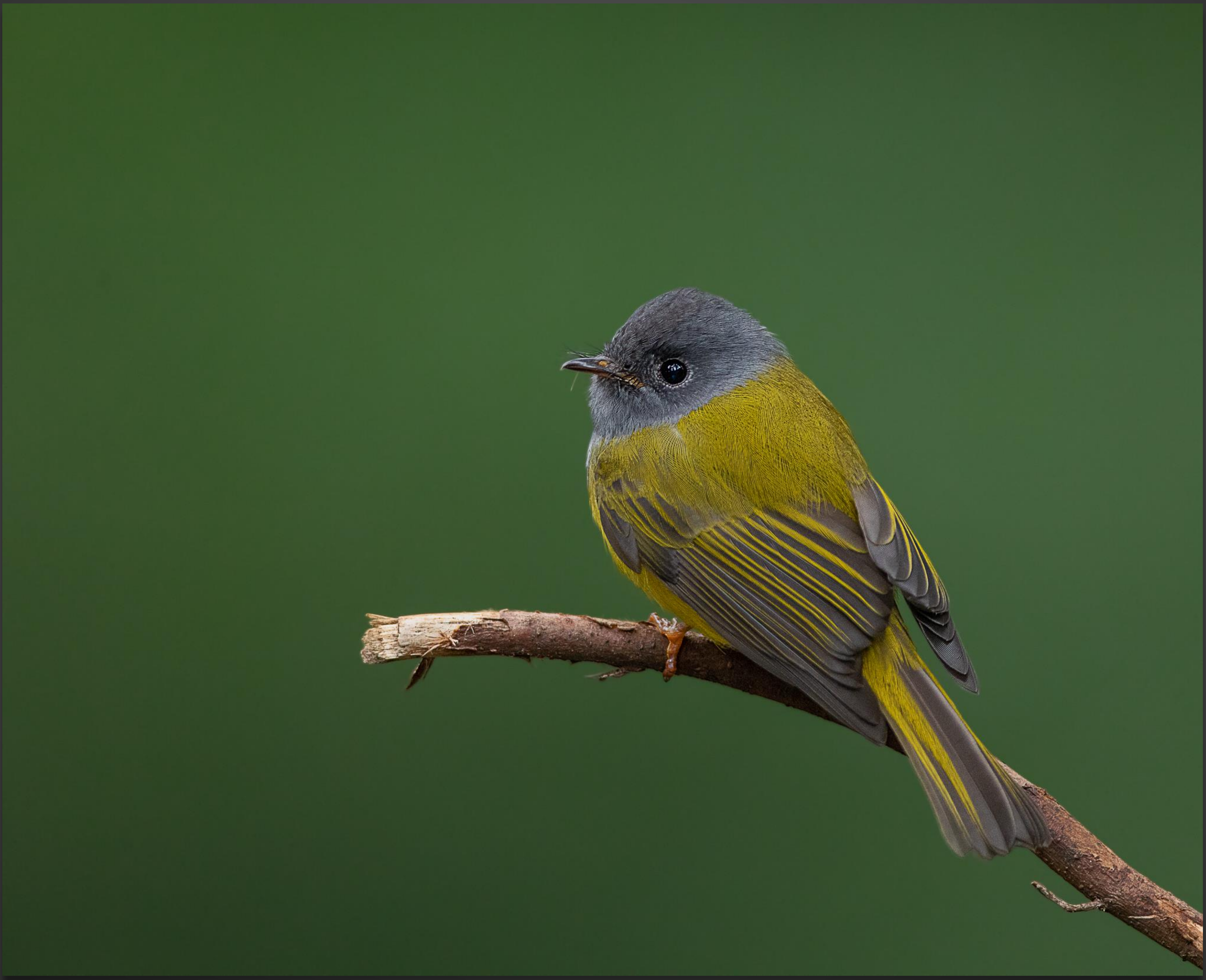
**© Husein Latif**


HUSEIN LATIF PHOTOGRAPHY

Blue-winged parakeet *(Psittacula columboides)*
Kotagiri - Tamil Nadu

# Photographer's Corner

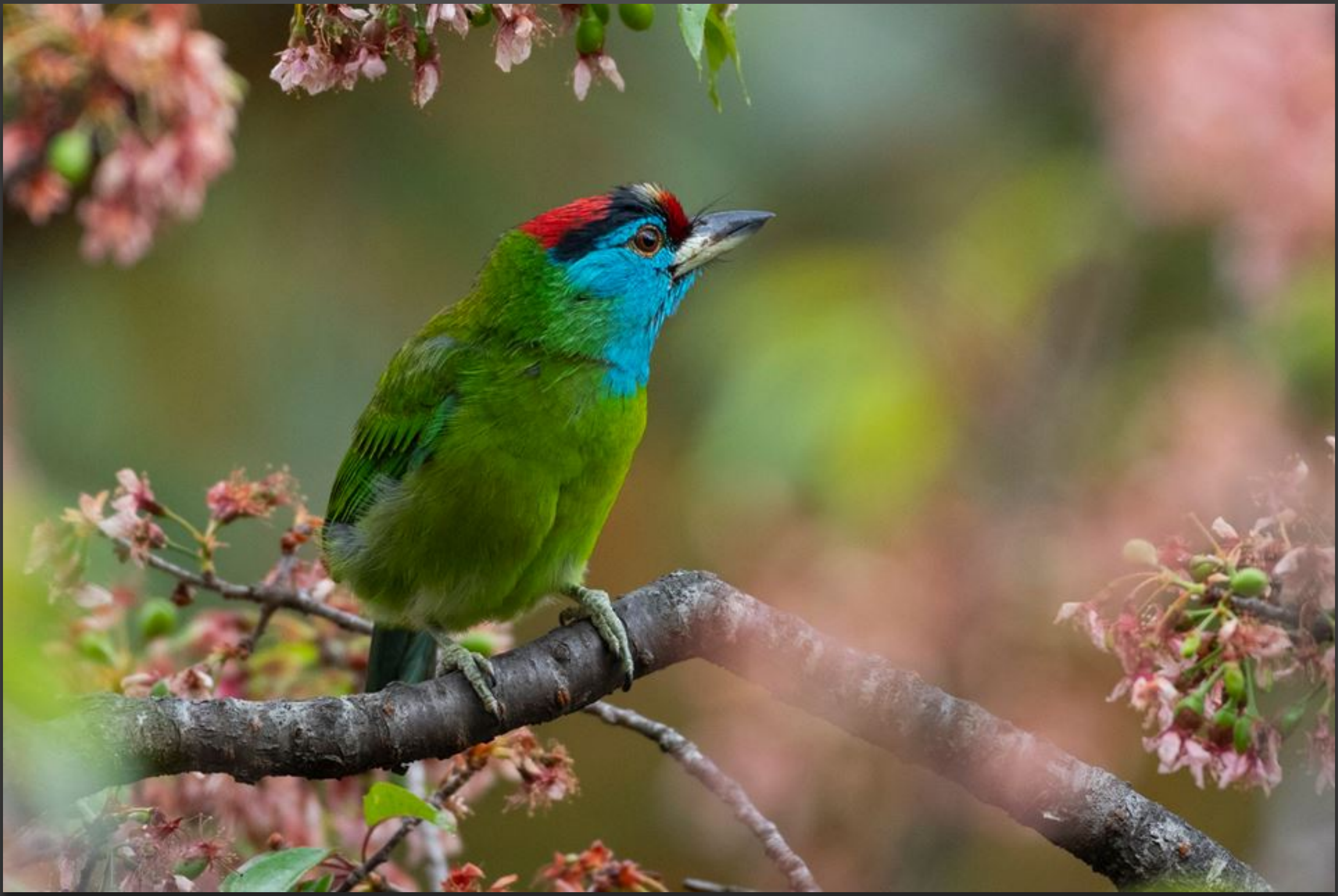
*© Phani Krishna Raavi*



Grey-headed canary-flycatcher *(Culicicapa ceylonensis)*
Nilgiris - Tamil Nadu

## Photographer's Corner

**© Santanu Majumder**



Blue-throated Barbet *(Megalaima asiatica)*
Sattal - Uttarakhand

# Photographer's Corner

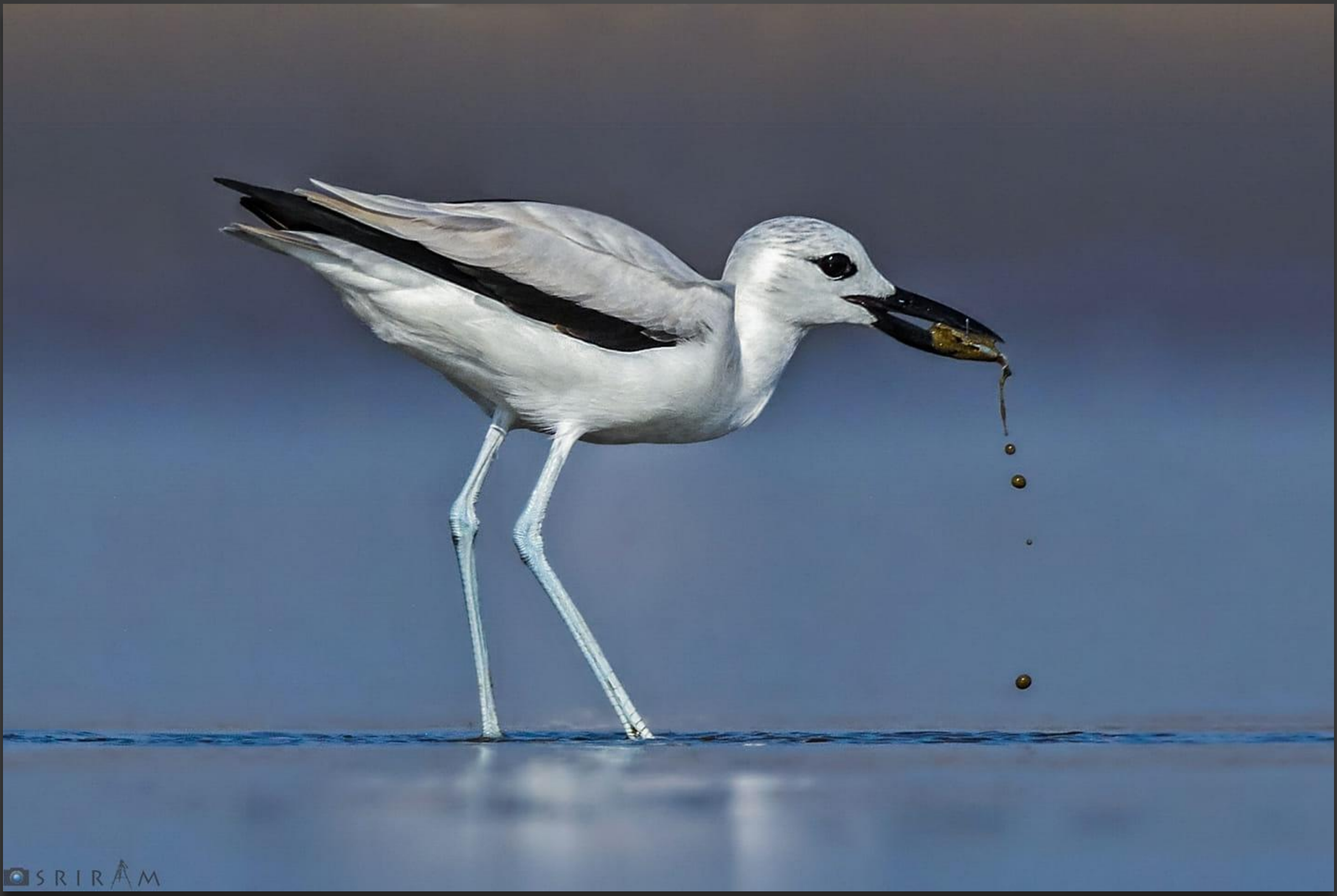
© Shreeniwas Kandukuree

SHREENIWAS KANDUKUREE I DEC 18

Red-Necked Falcon *(Falco chicquera)*
Ameenpur- Telangana

# Photographer's Corner

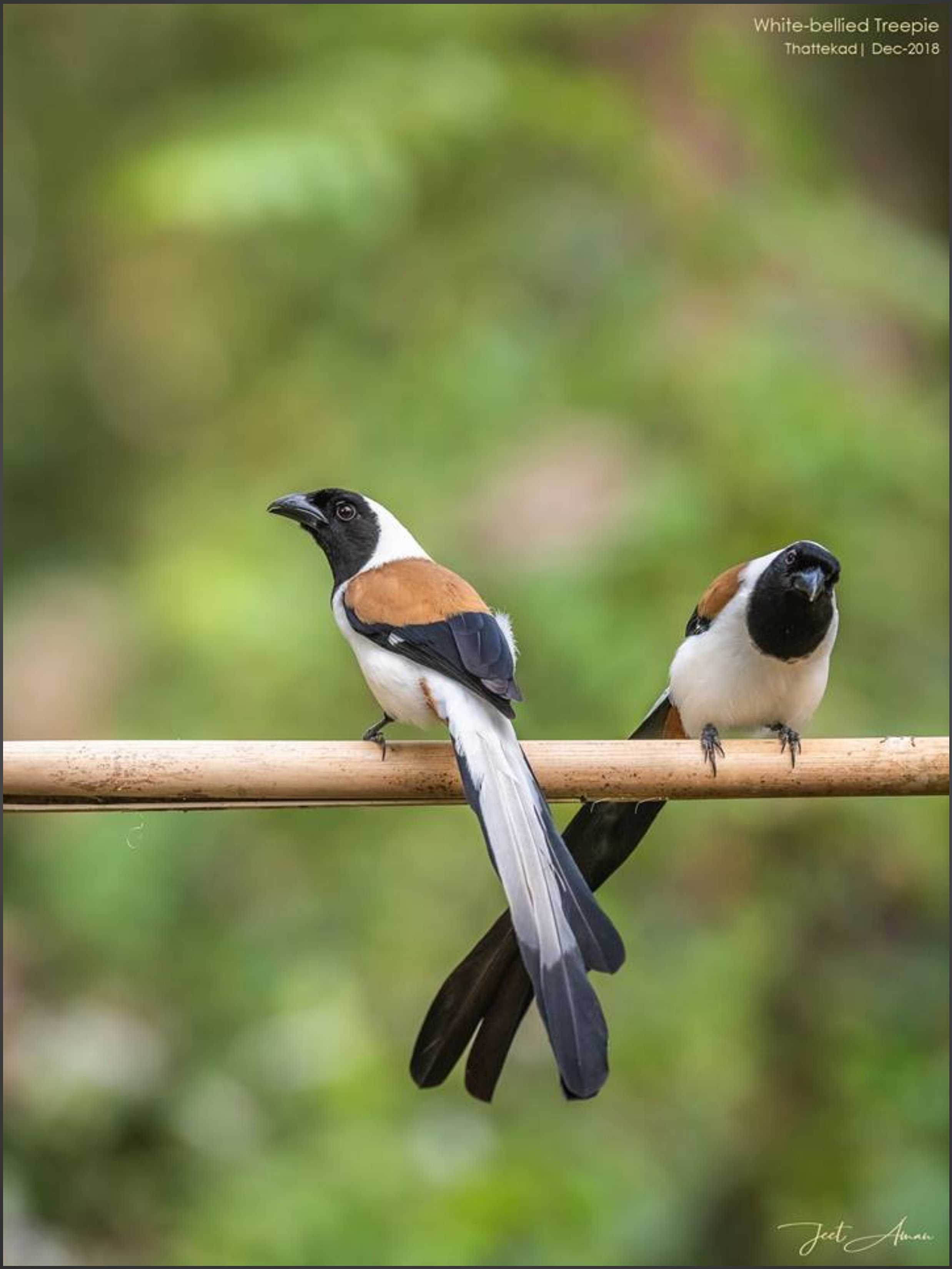
©Sriram Reddy



Crab-plover *(Dromas ardeola)*
Mandvi Beach - Gujarat

# Photographer's Corner

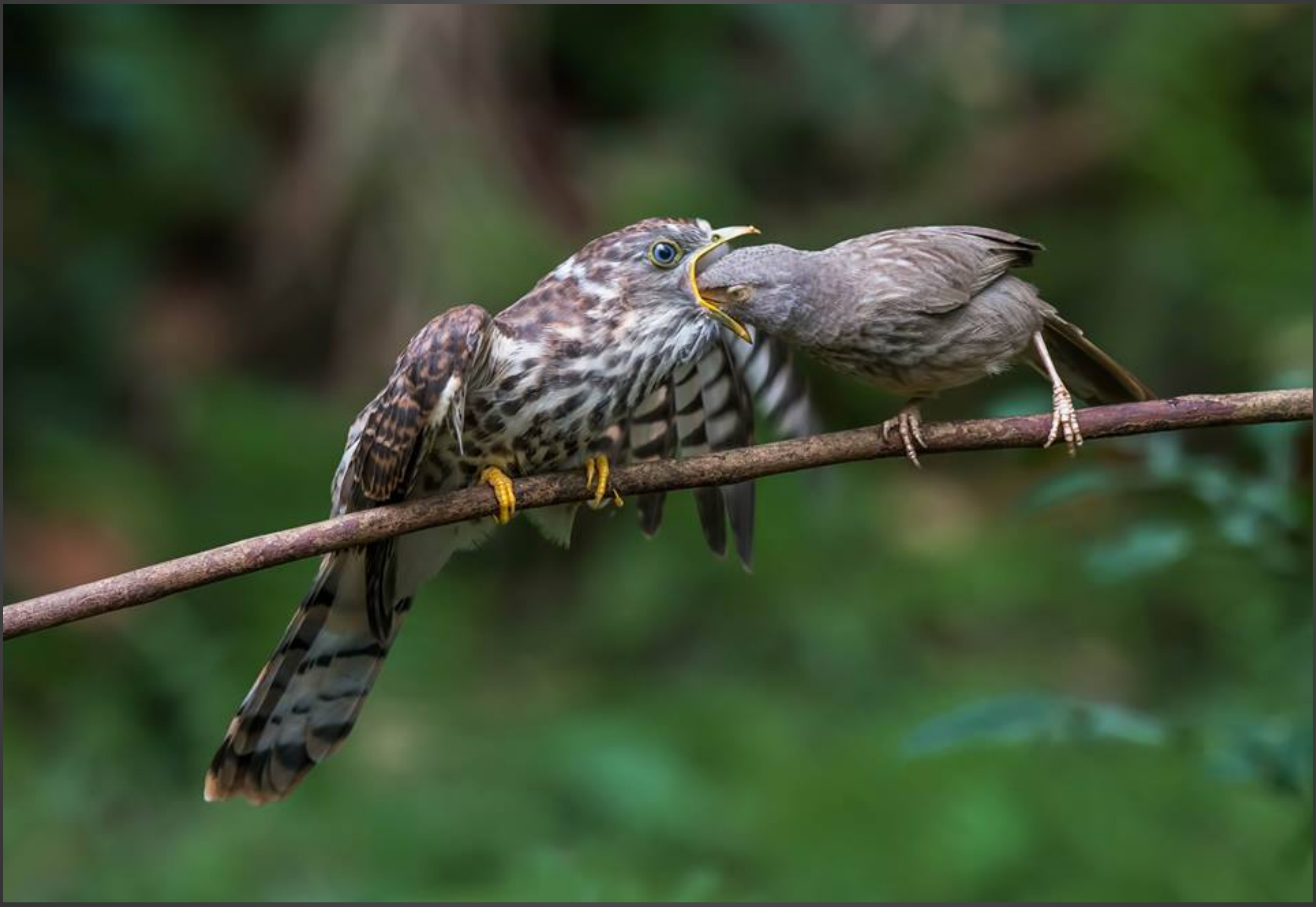
**© Jeet Aman**


White-bellied Treepie
Thattekad | Dec-2018
Jeet Aman

White-bellied treepies *(Dendrocitta leucogastra)*
Thattekad - Kerala

# Photographer’s Corner

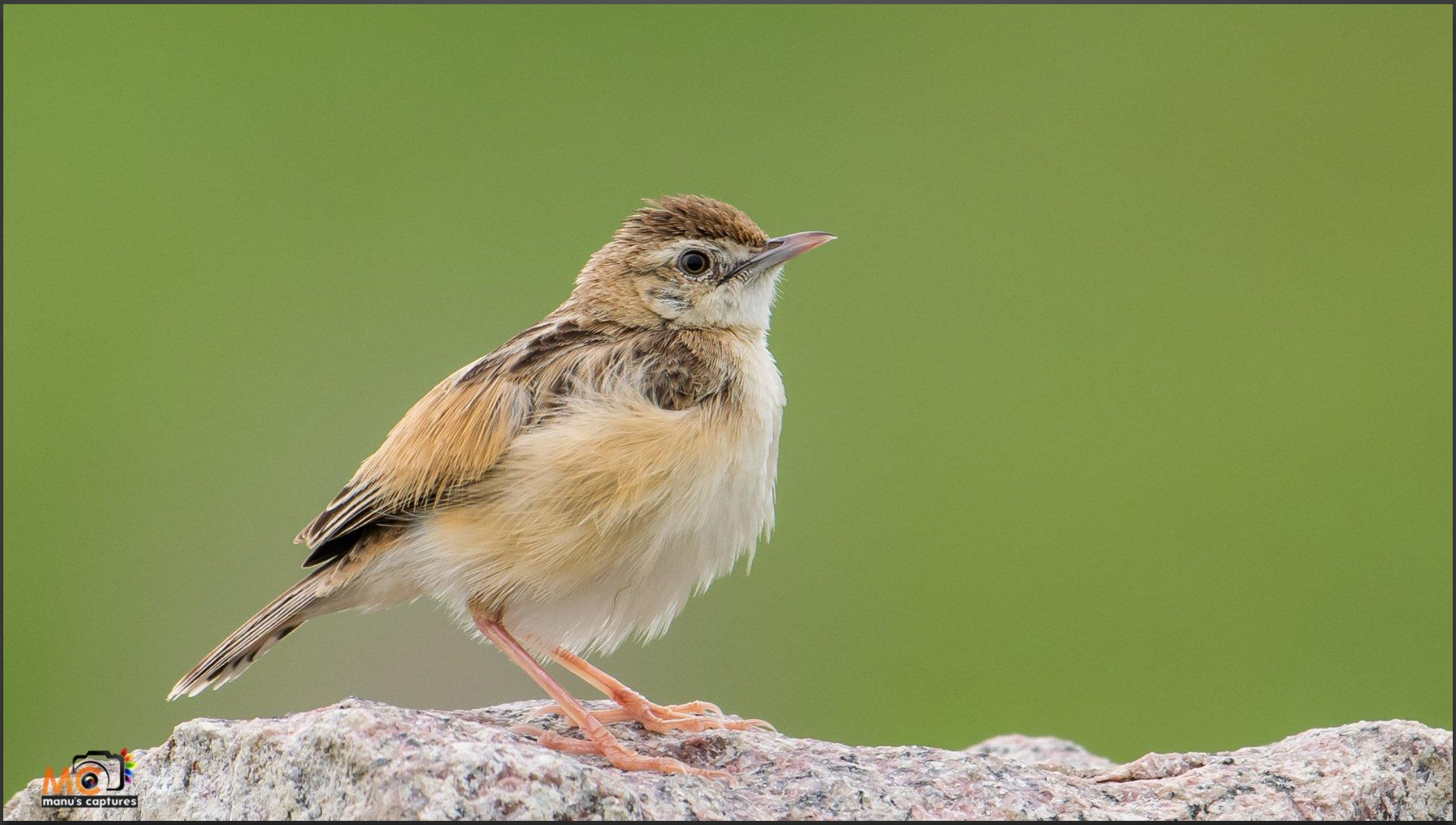
**© Dinesh Singh**



Common Hawk Cuckoo & Jungle Babbler
Thattekad - Kerala

# Photographer’s Corner

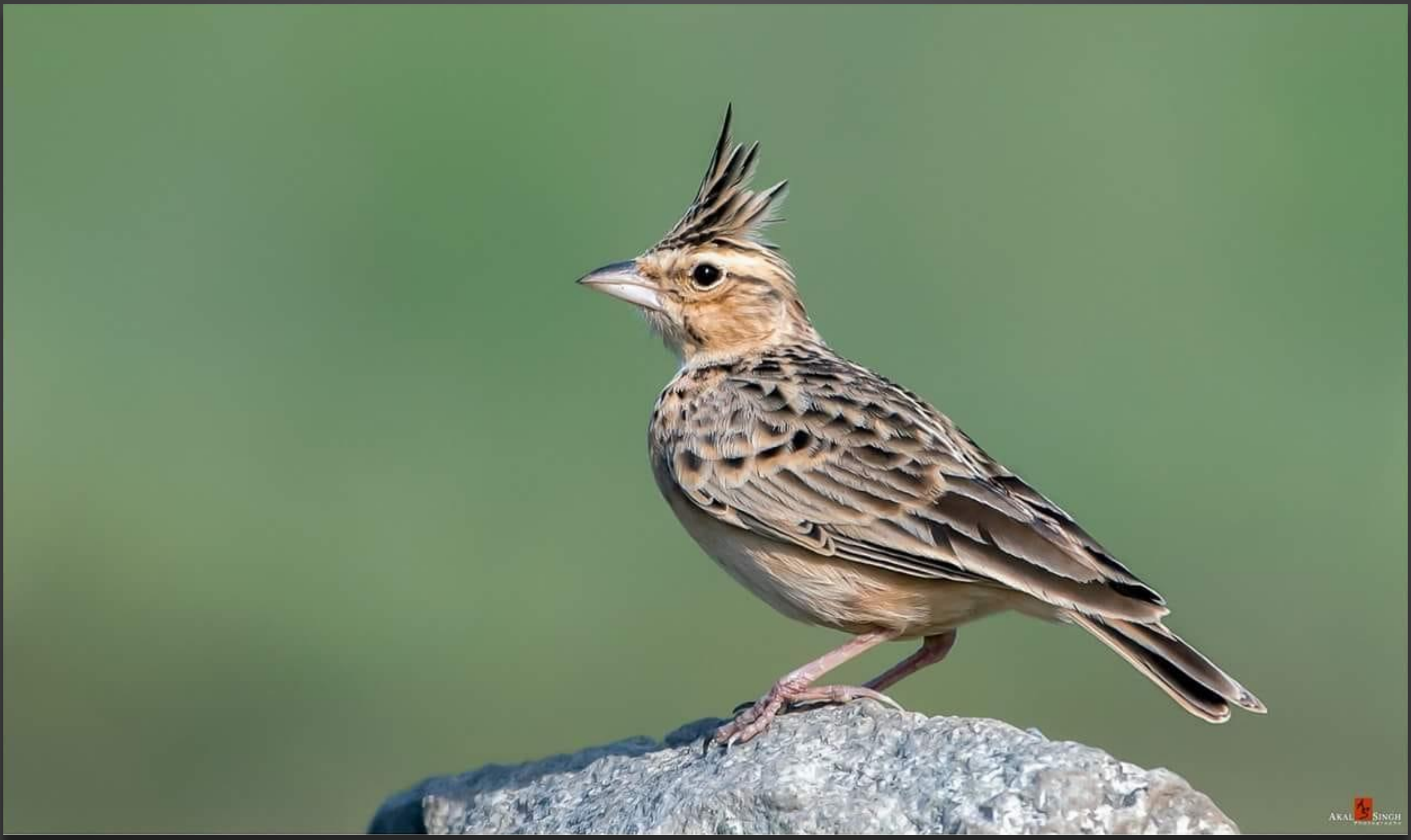
**© Manoj Kumar Vittapu**


manu's captures

Zitting cisticola *(Cisticola juncidis)*
Ameenpur- Telangana

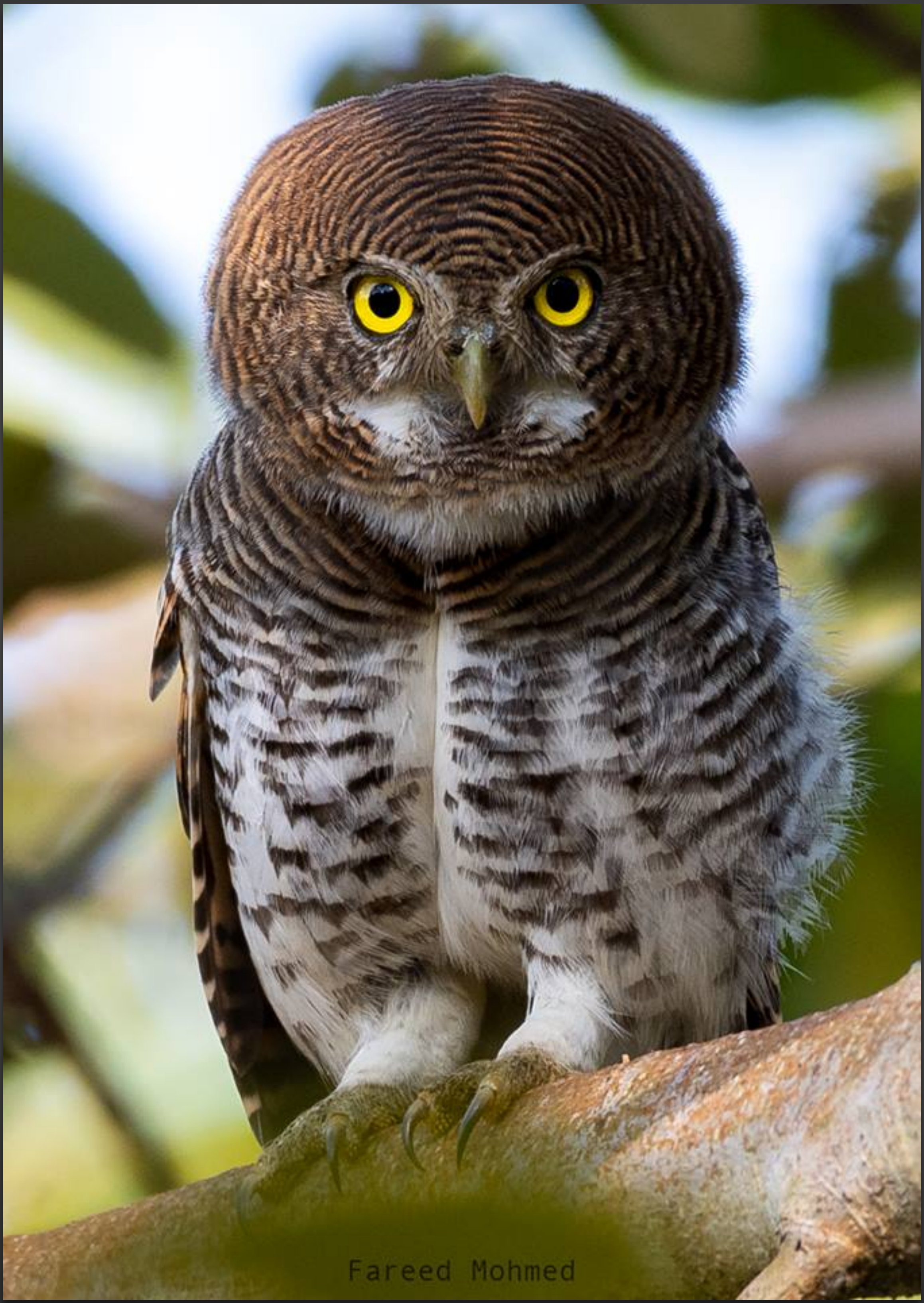
# Photographer’s Corner

©Akal Singh



Sykes's-Lark *(Galerida deva)*
Osman Sagar - Telangana

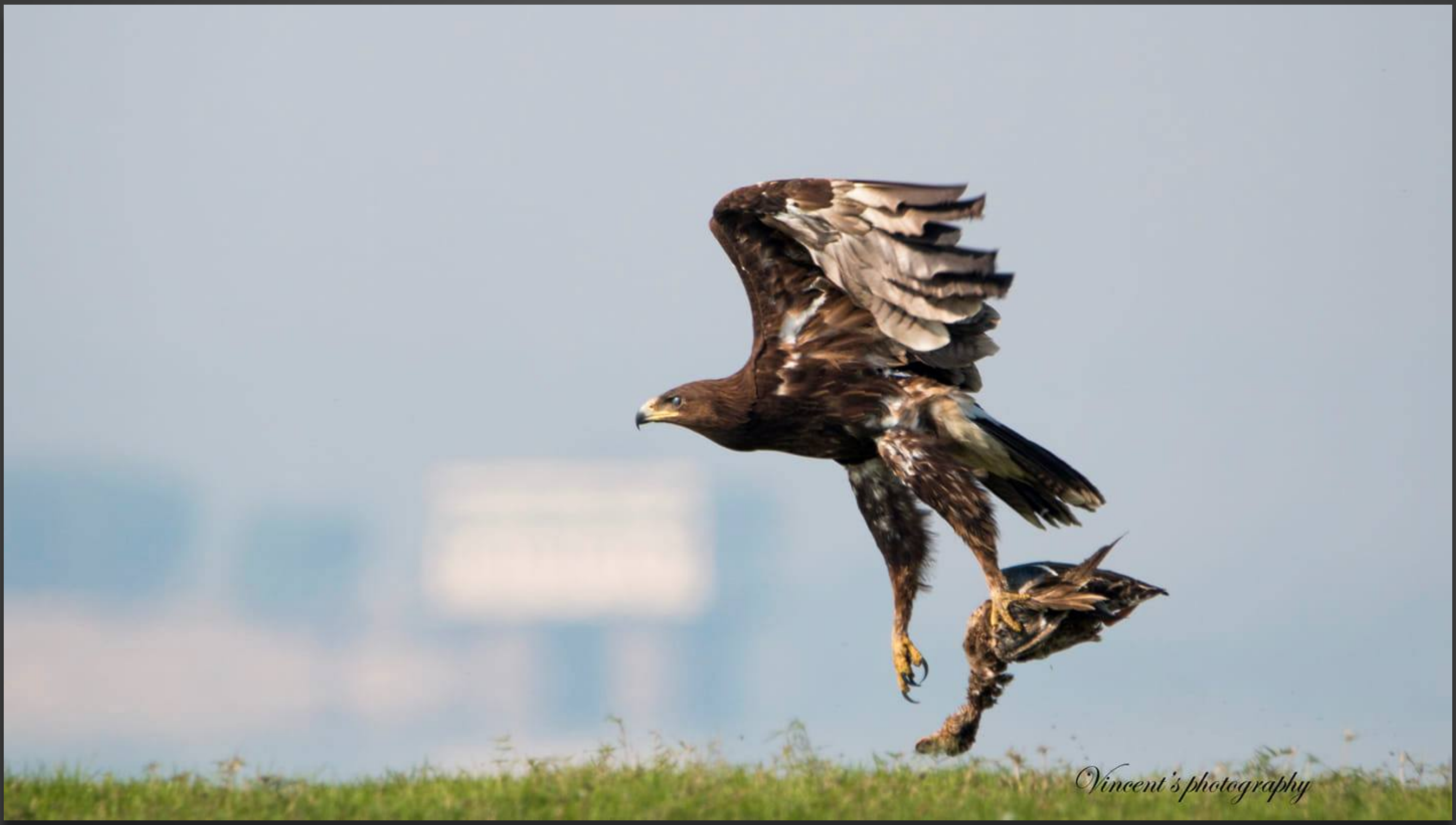
**© Fareed Mohmed**


Fareed Mohmed

Jungle Owlet *(Glaucidium radiatum)*
Telangana

# Photographer's Corner

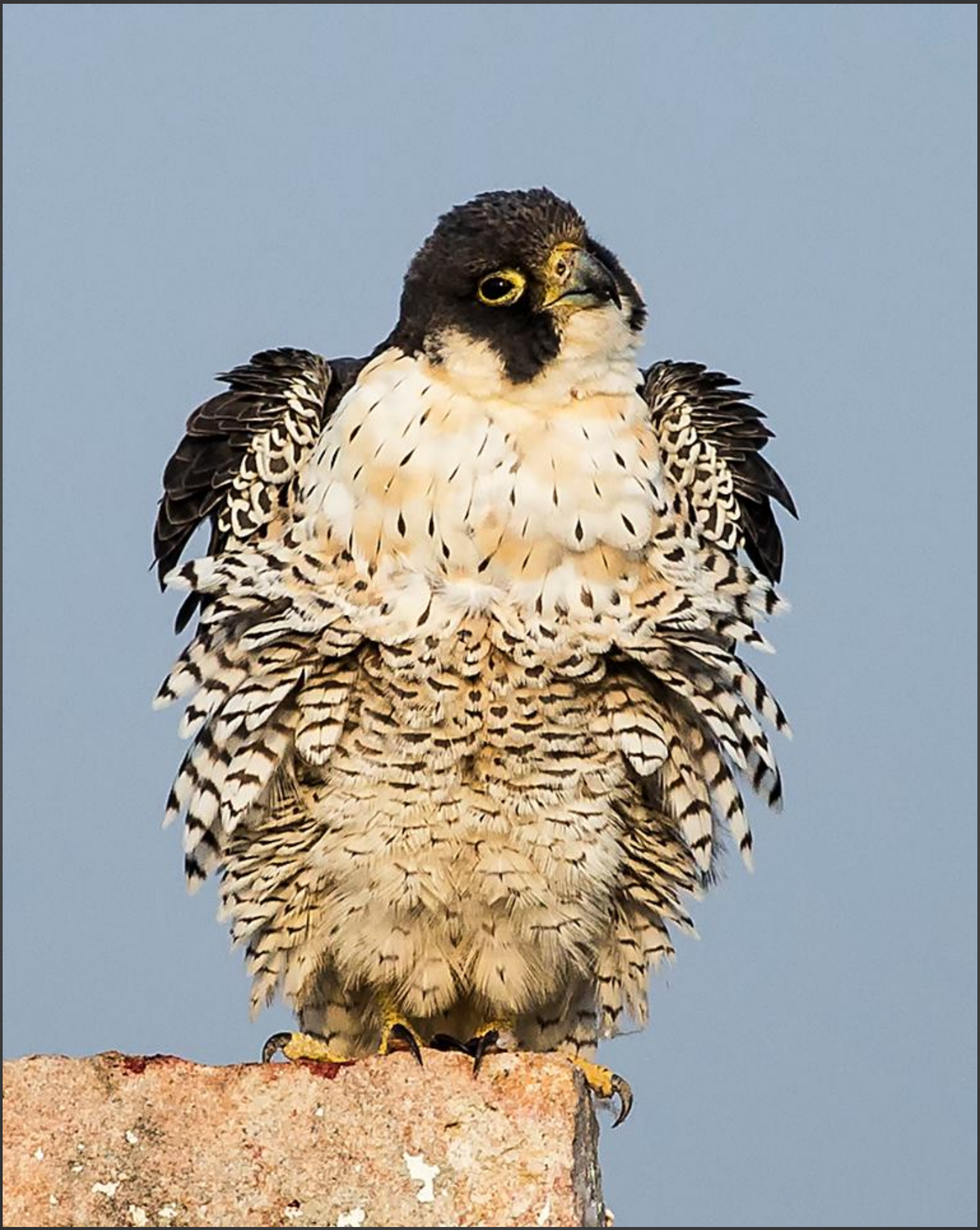
*© Vincent Vinay Kumar*


Vincent's photography

Greater Spotted Eagle *(Clanga clanga)*
Bhigwan - Maharashtra

# Photographer’s Corner

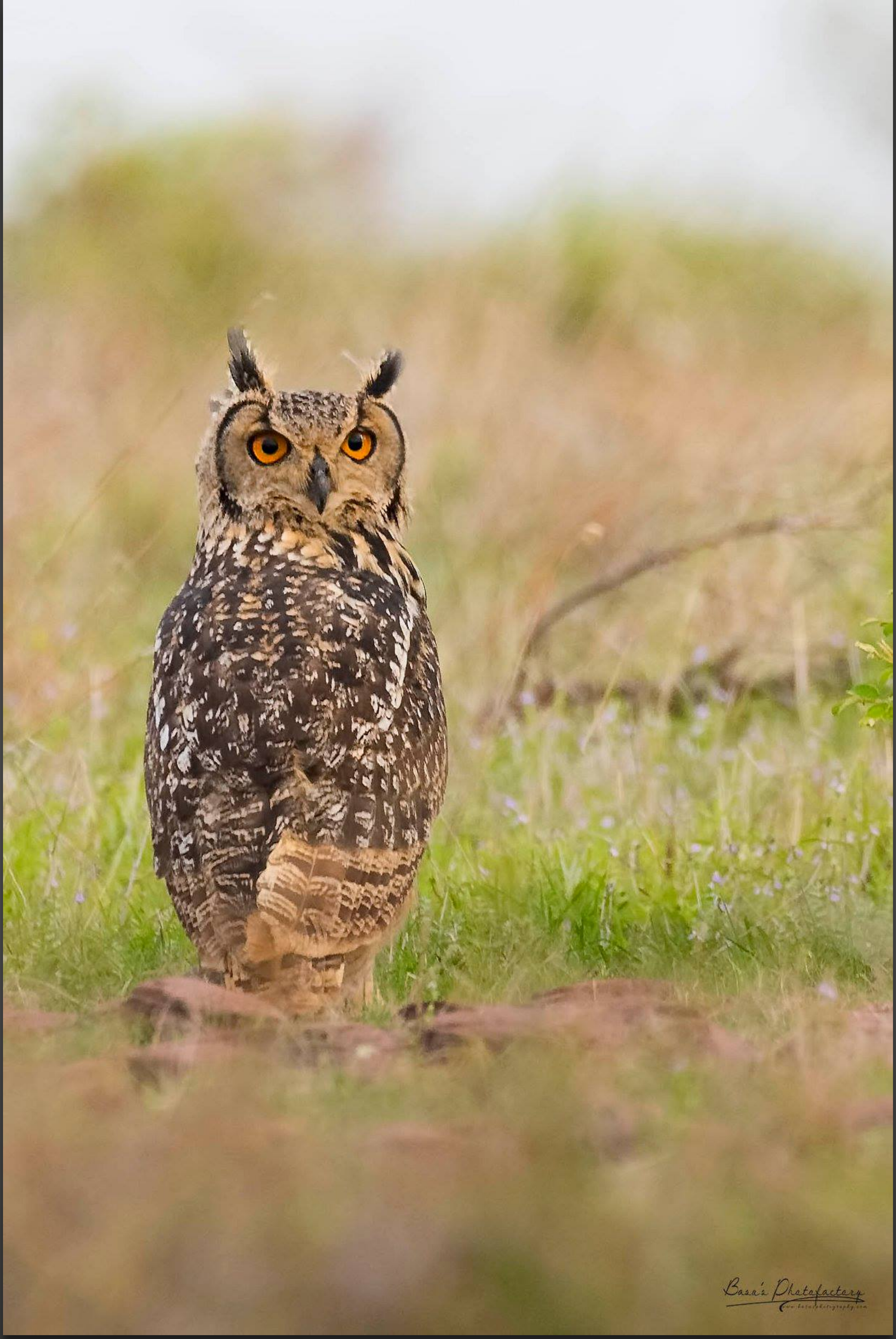
*© Naresh Vadrevu*



Peregrine Falcon *(Falco peregrinus)*
LRK - Gujarat

# Photographer’s Corner

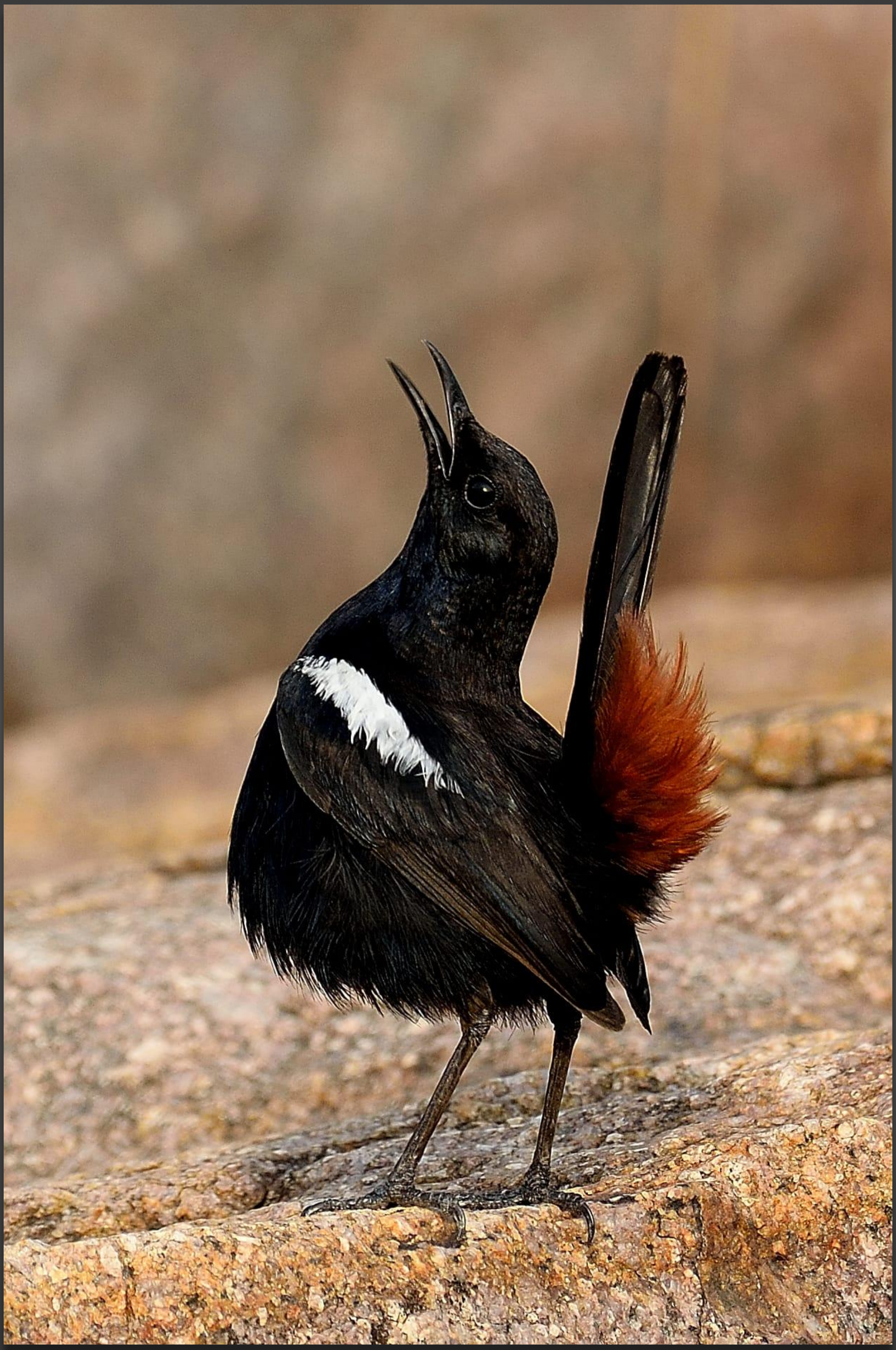
*©Soumyajit Basu*


Basu's Photofactory

Indian Eagle Owl *(Bubo bengalensis)*
Kurnool - Andhra Pradesh

# Photographer's Corner

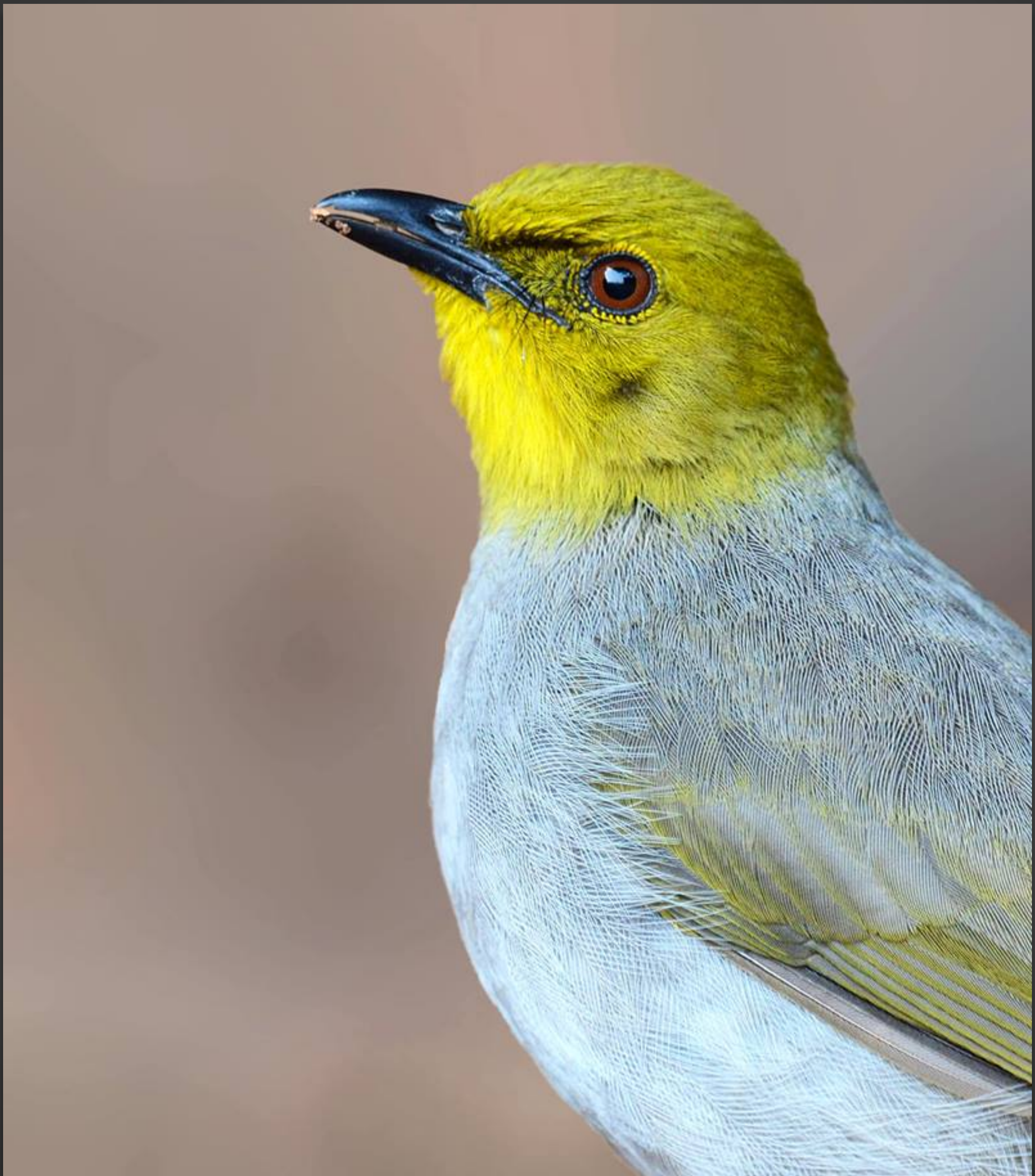
**© Mangeshsingh Thakur**



Indian Robin *(Copsychus fulicatus)*
Ameenpur- Telangana

## Photographer's Corner

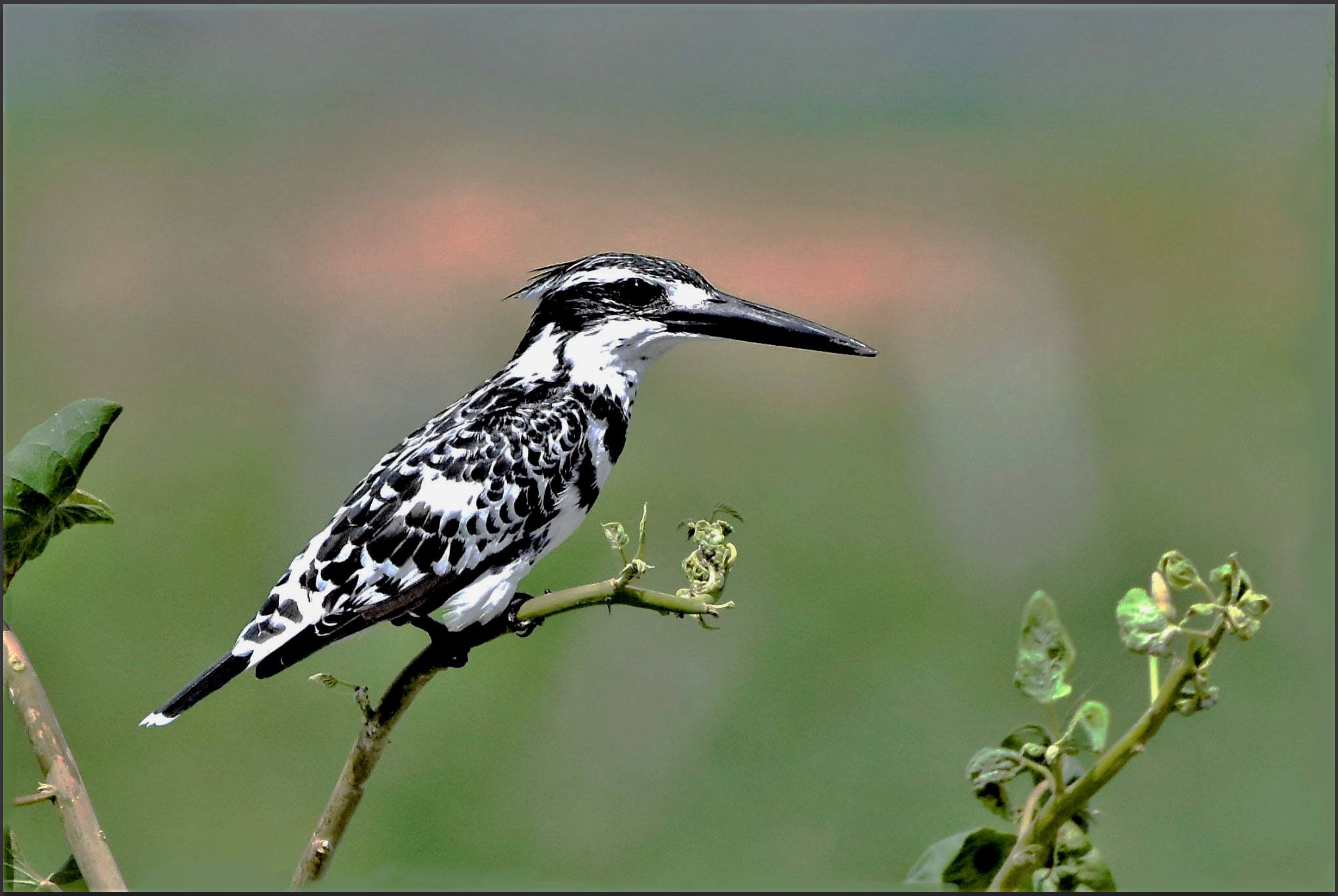
**© RK Balaji**



Yellow-throated bulbul *(Pycnonotus xantholaemus)*
Umamaheswaram - Telangana

# Photographer's Corner

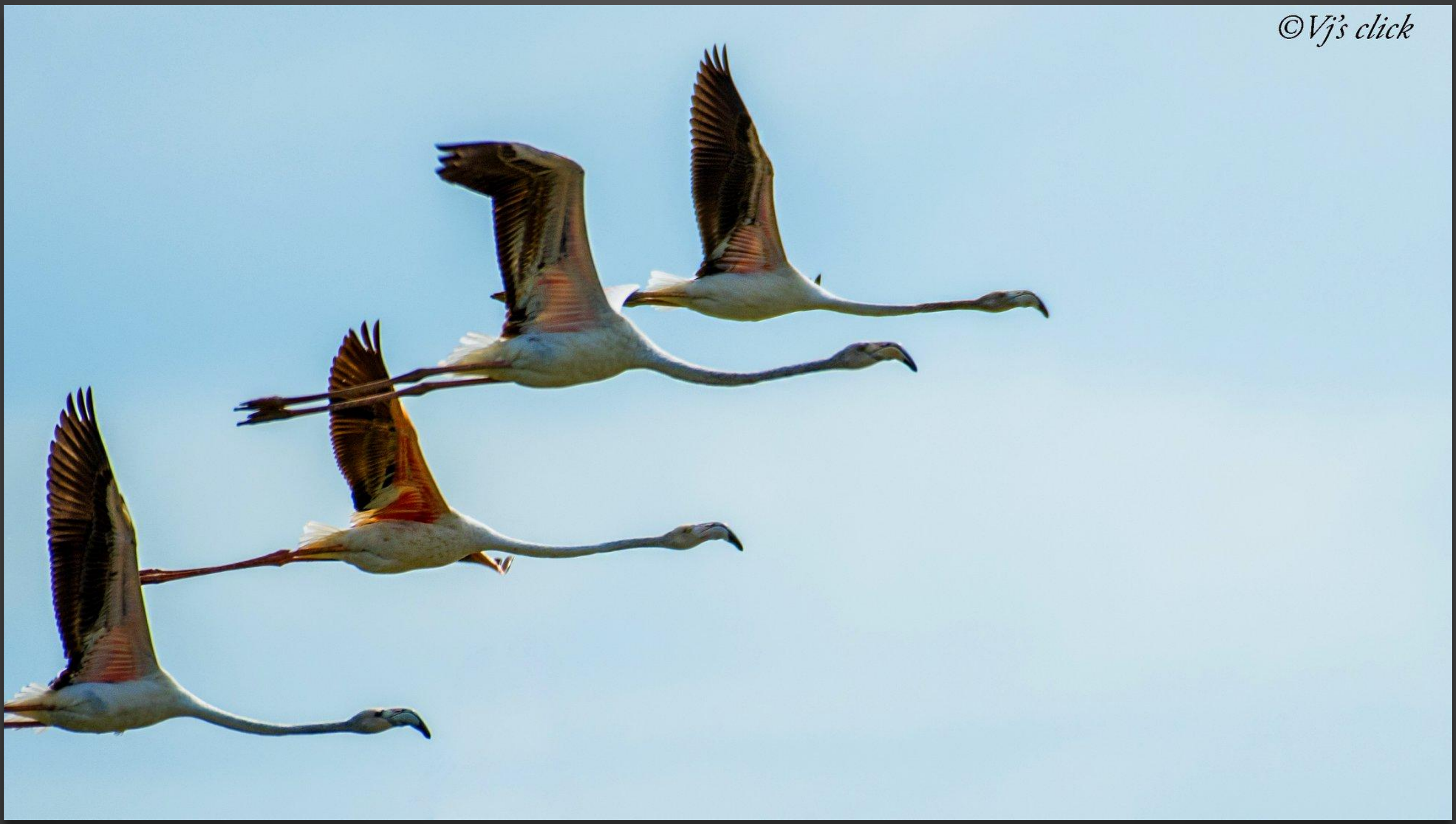
©Sarath Babu Dhulipalla



Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*)
Nallagandla Lake - Telangana

# Photographer's Corner

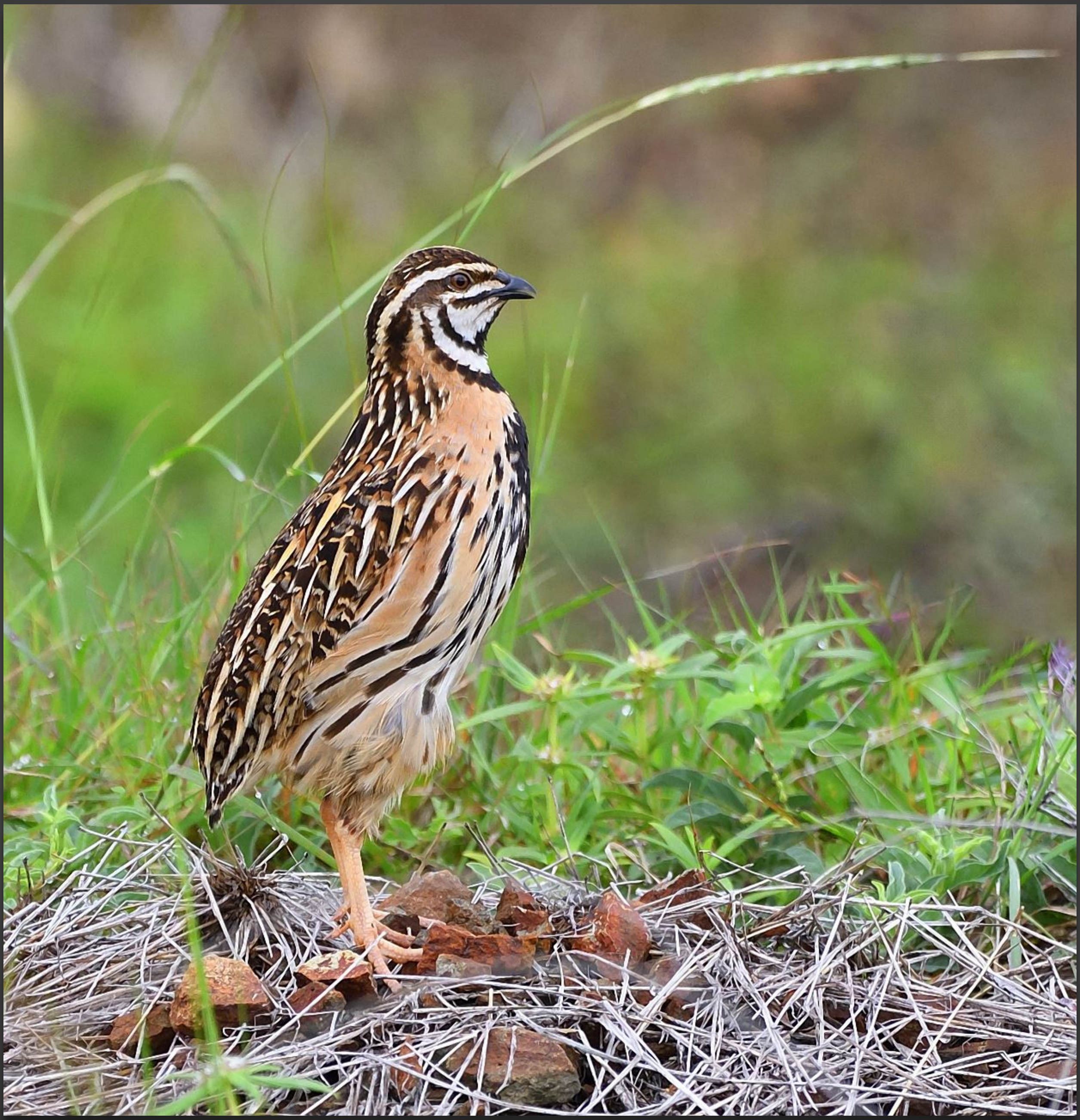
**© Dasari Vijay**



Greater Flamingos *(Phoenicopterus roseus)*
Anna Sagar - Telangana

# Photographer's Corner

© GS Rao



Rain Quail *(Coturnix coromandelica)*
Pune - Maharashtra

# Photographer's Corner

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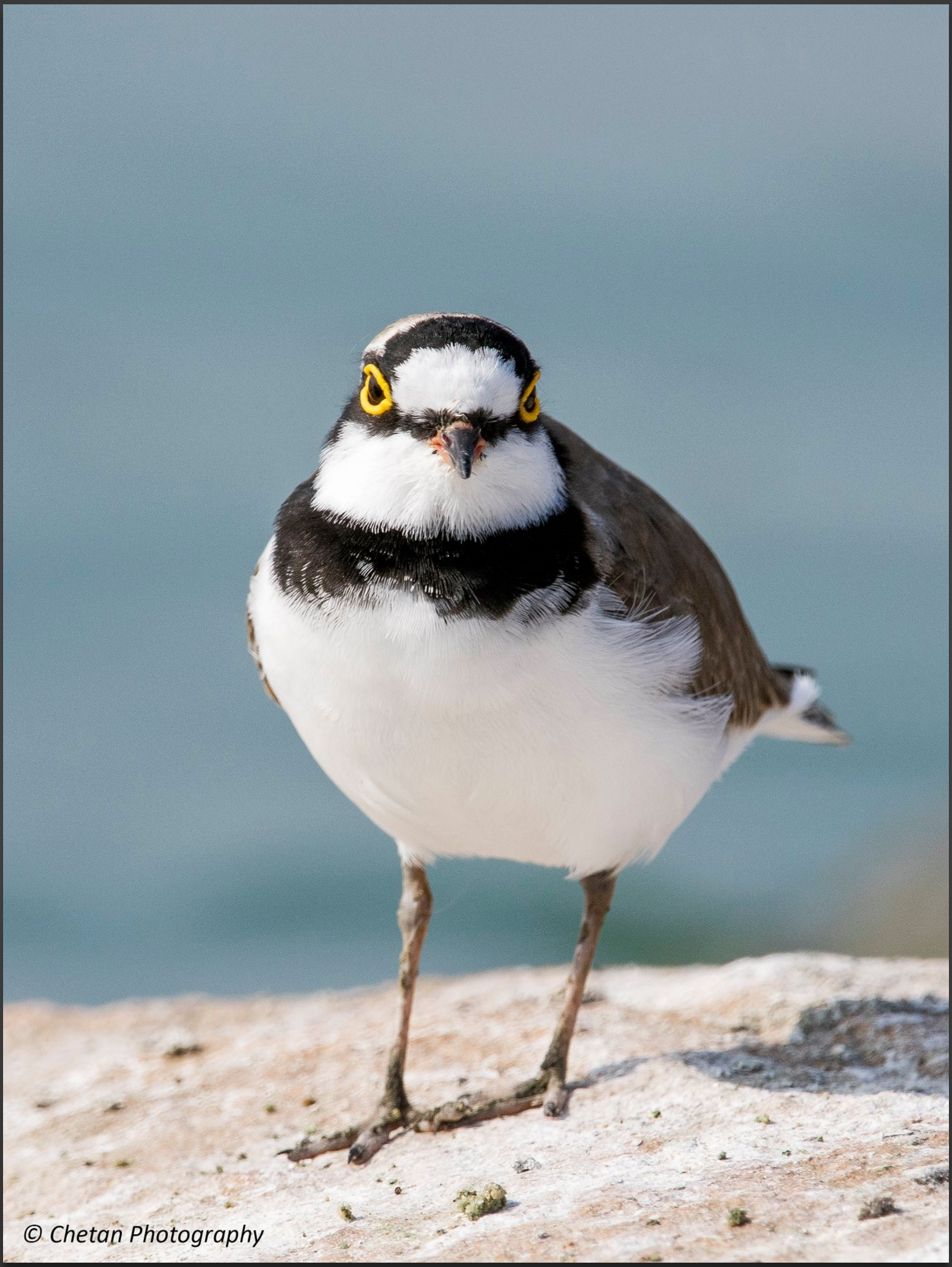
© Chetan Photography

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius)*
Ameenpur- Telangana

ARANYA
Vol.2 Issue 1 | JANUARY 2019

**Black and Orange Flycatcher**
**By Phani Krishna Ravi**

Hyderabad Birding Pals